Daily Report

Latin America

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FBIS-LAT-93-073 *19 April 1993*

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Cuba

Bay of Pigs Ceremonies Scheduled for 16 Apr

FL1604132893 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Many ceremonies have been scheduled for 16 April throughout Cuba, in celebration of Militiamen's Day and to commemorate the beginning of the first great U.S. military defeat in America. We have been informed that in each province the meetings are to [deben] turn into shows of support for the revolution, which 32 years ago gave the world a great lesson, exhibiting unity and defeating the mercenaries who landed at the Bay of Pigs.

Political Event Noted

FL1604194493 Havana Cuba Vision Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Cuban youths have been convened on 18 April to participate in whatever sugarcane harvest task is required. This is the preamble to remembrance and observance of a feat the world came to know as the first defeat of imperialism in America.

[Begin Union of Young Communist First Secretart Juan Contino recording, identified by caption] On 19 April we will form a column of approximately 150 youths, together with the national bureau, to march from the Australia Mill to Bay of Pigs. We are going to go by all the monuments along the way to render homage to those who fell at the Bay of Pigs. At the end, we will have an encounter with history. We will meet with a group of captains who participated in that event and with residents of Bay of Pigs, Playa Larga, and that general area who also played a very heroic, courageous role and who later, with the help of all the people, made the victory possible. At 2130 GMT, the hour of victory, we will hold a political event there where our commander in chief ordered the final shot of the cannon of this tank. There we will celebrate, with happiness and enthusiasm, the Bay of Pigs victory and will remember the entire effort of all our heroes. [end recording]

Latin American, Caribbean Meeting Preparatory Committee Formed

FL1604154393 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1402 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] The national preparatory committee for the fourth Latin American and Caribbean meeting on the solidarity, sovereignty, and life of our peoples, to be held in Havana from 25 to 28 January, 1994 was officially formed on 14 April. Presided over by Politburo member Jose Ramon Balaguer, the national committee's vice presidents are Alfredo Ross Leal, secretary general of the Cuban Workers Federation; Vilma Espin, president of the Federation of Cuban Women; Orlando Lugo Fonte, president of the National Association of Small Farmers; Sixto Batista Santana, national coordinator of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution; and Juan Contino, first secretary of the Union of Young Communists.

The national preparatory committee will be in charge of, among other things, publicizing any tasks that may arise, (?as well as) participation by Cuba's mass and social organizations in this assembly of the peoples of the Caribbean.

Robaina, Officials Sign Chris Hani Condolence Book

FL1604225493 Havana Cuba Vision Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Excerpt] Politburo members Roberto Robaina, foreign relations minister, and Jorge Lezcano, the first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba in Havana, and other personalities and the diplomatic corps signed on 16 April the book of condolences for the murder of Chris Hani, secretary general of the Communist Party of South Africa. [passage omitted]

Culture Minister Returns From Trip to PRC, DPRK

FL1704182893 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Excerpt] Today in Beijing, Culture Minister Armando Hart Davalos said that Cuba and the PRC are the heirs of the best of the socialist traditions of the 20th century.

Upon his return to Beijing following a trip to Pyongyang, where he met with DPRK President Kim Il-song, the Cuban minister said that we form the small group of nations that uphold the flag of socialism, together with the SRV and the DPRK. [passage omitted] This Saturday, Hart met with high-level officials of the information office of the Council of State of the PRC.

Colombian Tour Operators, Journalists Arrive in 'Tourist Hub'

FL1604180593 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1410 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Over 100 Colombian tour guides and journalists have arrived in the main urban tourist hub to find out what it has to offer and to see the famous resorts' installations. A majority of the visitors are happy to be in Cuba. They have found here a country different from the one the enemies of the revolution picture abroad.

Colombian tour operator (?Piro Gonzalez) said he is very happy in our country, where he has found a merry, friendly people and an image very different from the one disseminated in his country. He said that a majority of his travel companions are determined to promote tourism to Cuba in Colombia and that he personally hopes to send a first group of vacationers in July.

Nigerian Envoy Stresses Solidarity

FL1604191993 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1411 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] On the Isle of Youth, Y. Alhassan, ambassador of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to Cuba, stressed his nation's solidarity with our country. After touring the Isle of Youth's educational and historic centers and economic targets, the diplomat met with representatives of the scholarship students from various Third World nations who are studying on the Isle of Youth. The Nigerian ambassador pointed out the importance of the program of cooperation promoted by Cuba and affirmed that Cuba will never end up standing alone because it has always extended a helping hand to friends, and now it is the duty of Cuba's friends to provide her with support.

Approximately 9,000 young people from 20 African, Asian, and Latin American nations are studying in rural schools on the Isle of Youth.

Ambassador to Moldova Presents Credentials

FL1604145693 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1155 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] The presidents of the Community of Independent States will hold an emergency meeting this afternoon in Minsk, capital of Belarus, to discuss, first and foremost, the fact that internal conflicts are getting worse, as well as the worsening economic crisis of the nations of the former Soviet Union, particularly Russia.

In a ceremony held in Kishinev, Cuban Ambassador Diogenes Hernandez, who is ambassador to Moldova in addition to Ukraine today presented his credentials Mircea Snegur, president of that former Soviet nation. Hernandez, who is also the Cuban ambassador to the Ukraine, said the meeting with Snegur had served to expedite the strengthening of bilateral relations.

The Cuban diplomat told PRENSA LATINA by telephone that there exists the possibility of signing an agreement next month to expand the levels of exchanges. He also said Snegur recalled the meeting with President Fidel Castro during the Earth Summit in Brazil last year.

UJC Members Mobilize for Havana Province Sugarcane Harvest

FL1704161493 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 3 Apr 93

[Text] The cool, humid Artemisa morning was the main accomplice on this workday when members of the national bureau of the Union of Young Communists [UJC] and other workers mobilized to this region of Havana Province to fight off weeds. Many were planning to test their hoes, but the unexpected change in duties provoked several opinions:

[Begin recording] [first unidentified speaker] I believe that it does serve a productive function because this is practically the sugarcane with which we are going to begin the new harvest, but it is also the harvest we have to produce despite a shortage of resources for weeding.

[Second unidentified speaker] We should not forget that the sugarcane harvest is one of the top resources, or the top resource for the development of the country. I believe that to fulfill this task should be the first response of the youth. There are many youths, not only here in Havana Province but throughout Cuba who are involved in essential tasks such as the sugarcane harvest.

[Third unidentified speaker] We thought we were going to work with the hoe, but it rained and is now impossible.

[Fourth unidentified speaker] On other occasions, whenever we worked on agrarian tasks it has been in connection with priorities, the needs of the sites where workers are called to give all their effort and work. We have selected agrarian contingents, the potato harvest, and continuous production. In this case, we selected the roof tile factory where we will be during the three days of what we are calling the work festival. [end recording]

Sugarcane Harvest To Last Longer Than Expected

PA1704032593 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] Cuban Sugar Industry Minister Juan Herrera announced in Havana that the island's sugarcane harvest will last one month longer than expected due to fuel problems and climatic conditions. Herrera said the initial harvest plan was affected by late starts at many sugar mills, a lack of fuel and lubricants, and climatic adversities during the month of March, which is considered the best month for the harvest. Herrera said that little could be done due to the violent winter hurricane that caused $1 billion in damage on the island.

Herrera said the current priority is to mill the planned amounts of sugarcane because a significant volume of sugarcane has not yet been processed due to a lack of machinery and cutters. He added that cutters will be sent from one province to another to help out at the sugar mills with the longest delays.

On 13 April, Carlos Lage Davila, executive secretary of the Council of Ministers, said that sugar production is vital if the country is to overcome its difficult economic situation.

Rains Interrupt Operations

FL1704180593 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] Again, rains have interrupted sugarcane operations and diverse agricultural activities in the western and central regions of the country.

The intense downpours on Friday morning [16 April] in Havana Province partially or completely halted the cutting, picking, and transportation of sugarcane in the

16 mills of the province. On Friday the Camilo Cienfuegos, Gregorio Arle Mayaiich, and Manuel Isla Mills were the only mills in operation, but only for sugar processing, as they also lack cane to process.

The five complexes of Pinar del Rio Province halted operations due to the lack of raw materials as a result of the intensity of the rains. The rains also had an impact in Matanzas and Cienfuegos.

In nonsugar agriculture, the most affected areas in Havana Province were Guira de Melena, Batabano, Alquizar, Quivican, and Artemisa. The potato harvest, which had been extended due to weather conditions and was scheduled to end this week, was extended to next week. In Guira de Melena particularly, it rained 185 mm and gusts of up to 96 miles per hour were registered. In this municipality, the spring planting program, which is already confronting delays due to the extension of the potato harvest, was affected.

In Matanzas, agricultural activities were halted, primarily the harvest of potatoes and other crops. The rains also caused interruptions in the agricultural activities of Villa Clara, Cienfuegos, and Sancti Spiritus Provinces. On this occasion, the impact in Pinar del Rio Province was not felt in the agricultural sector.

Communist Party Official Joins in Potato Harvest

FL1704014393 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 06 Apr 93

[Text] During the present campaign, the Melena del Sur Miscellaneous Crops Enterprise plans to harvest approximately 300,000 quintals of potatoes. To accomplish this, it is relying on the work of Havana mobilized workers.

The sunrise was met in the furrow; the urgency of the potato harvest does not permit any alternative. In the Melena del Sur Municipality in Havana Province, the mobilized workers made their own the "Give it to it" slogan of the youth. The work day was shared by a representation from the provincial committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, headed by its secretary, Jorge Lezcano Perez, as well as officials of the Cuban Workers Federation and other mass organizations, who worked alongside members of the Fabio Bravo Contingent and the Camilo Cienfuegos high-yield brigade. Arquelio Jimenez, director of Melena del Sur Miscellaneous Enterprise, spoke of the important contribution the Havana mobilized workers make to agrarian production.

[Begin Jimenez recording] It is impossible to speak of an enterprise that harvested 477,000 quintals the year before last and jumped to 1.005 million quintals last year. It would have been impossible without this work force. [end recording]

Domestic Trade Minister Cited on Specialty Shops

FL1604180193 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1403 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] After visiting San Antonio de los Banos and Quivican Municipalities in Havana Province, Domestic Trade Minister Manuel Vila Sosa told Radio Reloj that at the present time (?work is increasing) in the specialty shops [casas especializadas] nationwide. He said Las Tunas, Holguin, and Santiago de Cuba Provinces are doing good business. He (?pointed out) that the work of the specialty shops is part of the ministry's program for attenuating the consequences of the current [difficult] period we are going through, with the resource limitations encountered in this special period.

Vila Sosa also said the gastronomy sector is working on production and self-sufficiency, on getting foodstuffs to the population promptly, on recovering spare parts, and on extending services to the communities.

Audit Reveals 'Lack of Controls' at Agrarian Enterprise

FL1704173093 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] The lack of controls and administrative negligence provoked a deficit that affected the domestic economy to the tune of approximately 300,000 pesos at the Miguel Soneiras Miscellaneous Crops Enterprise in Guines Municipality, Havana Province. The principal tasks of this agrarian entity are to plant, produce, and harvest tubers and vegetables for distribution to the population and to several state organizations. Another of its main tasks is to supply Havana markets with agrarian products to satisfy the nutritional needs of consumers.

According to the report by lawyer Maribel Castellano from the provincial office of the prosecutor in Havana, during the audit conducted at the aforementioned enterprise, it was confirmed that agricultural products were distributed without being controlled or approved in the general production plan. On the other hand, a lack of control was confirmed on planned delivery. This resulted in a large difference between the authorized state plan and what was truly delivered. Another of the violations confirmed was that this enterprise sold agricultural products to state organizations at retail prices while it sold to the population at wholesale prices. Add to this the fact that this enterprise did not keep an accounting of the losses or missing products as well as failing to keep track of the number of boxes transported or their weight. This made it easy to subtract many of these products while enroute to their final destinations.

The prosecutor asked the administration of the enterprise to take measures toward eliminating the confirmed violations within 60 days. Likewise, it requested prosecution of those responsible for the violations.

Havana Province Health Budget, Projects Announced

FL1704140093 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1155 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] The Havana Province health budget for 1993 is 5,739,000 pesos, a high percentage of which will be used to expand hospitals, particularly the Ciro Redondo Hospital in Artemisa. Other projects include hospital expansions in San Jose de las Lajas, San Antonio de los Banos, Mariel, and Guanajay, plus the remodeling of houses into family doctors offices. Work is also being done at the psychiatric hospital in Guines and at the Caimitos polyclinic.

It was announced that 36 low-cost houses are being built, 26 for family doctors and the rest for health workers. The primary goals of the province are to prevent and treat optic neuritis and to reduce infant mortality, as well as promoting alternative medicine.

Higher Education Minister Cited on Technology Units

FL1604225793 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1955 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Higher education in Cuba has become a significant science and technology organization that is conducting 12 research programs. In a speech during the third plenum of the Science Union that ended today, Higher Education Minister Fernando Vecino Alegret explained that by June there will be 470,000 graduates in Cuba. Vecino mentioned that the 56 science and technology units of the Ministry of Higher Education [MES] are working to create what he called a modern university tied in to national life and socioeconomic development.

Plant biotechnology, production of medical equipment, recovery of parts, energy conservation, and production of medicine are included in the research programs sponsored by the MES.

Camaguey CDR Holds Fourth Congress 13 Apr

FL1504234993 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 13 Apr 93

[Text] The Committees for the Defense [CDR] of the Revolution in Camaguey Province are already in the full swing of their fourth congress and as a concrete demonstration of the tasks of the provincial organization, pledges have been made in different priority sectors.

The food program is being developed. Support for the sugar harvest and construction in each area are goals that the CDR will fulfill without neglecting the basic tasks of the organization.

The goal of Camaguey Province is to obtain 30,000 blood donations and recover more than 1.3 million bottles and other significant amounts of other important raw materials while maintaining a high 24-hour watchfulness.

This fourth congress of the CDR is being held in each block, in each zone, municipality, province, which without a doubt will mark a jumping off point regarding mass participation in the analysis. In April and May, the seat [sede] will increase on the base-level, while the process will finish on a provincial level before 28 September.

Cienfuegos Provincial Assembly Administrative Council Formed

FL1704021293 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] The Administrative Council of the Provincial Assembly of the People's Government was formed today in Cienfuegos, the first province in Cuba to conduct this activity at this level. This process will conclude on 18 April in Holguin Province. Politburo members Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, president of the National Assembly, and Nelson Torres Perez, first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba in Cienfuegos, and other national and provincial government and party leaders participated in the meeting.

At its conclusion, Alarcon made statements for this newscast on what the creation of the Administrative Councils represents toward perfecting the people's government.

[Begin Alarcon recording] It will eliminate obstacles and middlemen, and will simplify the mechanisms of the administration by placing tasks and responsibilities more directly in the hands of the comrades in charge of education, health, or the various areas under their control. [end recording]

The task of the commissions of the National Assembly to assess the work of the People's Councils and the energy program was also discussed. The two subjects will be discussed at the next session of the National Assembly.

[Begin Alarcon recording] These are subjects of interest to everyone. They affect everyone and everyone can contribute to them. I believe that the energy issue is extremely clear: from unnecessarily turning on a light bulb to turning it off on time, to the engineers who are developing new technologies, to the workers drilling for oil, everyone has something to contribute. I believe it is very important to achieve a higher exchange of experiences in the People's Councils. [end recording]

Santiago de Cuba Administrative Council Formed 16 Apr

FL1604225393 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1932 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] On 16 April, the provincial Administrative Council of Santiago de Cuba was formed. Reynaldo Endis and Ostorio Fong were selected as president and vice president, respectively, and 18 additional members were selected. Endis read a letter sent by Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, who is a deputy for Santiago de

Cuba, in which the commander in chief apologized for being unable to be present on this day, as he would have wished, with the people of Santiago de Cuba who are struggling to develop the revolution.

Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, president of the National Assembly, stated that this step will help maintain stricter control of administrative functions with the participation of the people. Politburo members Esteban Lazo, Jose Ramon Balaguer, and Maria de los Angeles Garcia, among other officials, were present for the ceremony marking the creation of the Administrative Council of Santiago de Cuba Province.

Granma Administrative Council Formed 17 Apr

FL1704182593 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] The Administrative Council of Granma Province was formed on 17 April. It is headed by Rafael Dominguez Fernandez and Guillermo Rodriguez Quesada, as president and vice president respectively. It has five vice presidents, a secretary, and another 10 members representing the main sectors of the economy and services in this province.

Politburo member Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, president of the National Assembly, reiterated during his speech that certain changes will be made in the operations of the National Assembly.

[Begin Alarcon recording] We should try, above all, to achieve the most effective, permanent, and active participation of our people in all activities of the People's Government at all its levels. This is the essential difference between our true democracy and all the systems of the world that consider themselves democratic. Government of the people and for the people has existed in Cuba in a way that cannot be compared with any other since 1 January 1959, when a truly popular government was established in Cuba for the first time. [end recording]

Comrades Jaime Crombet and Ernesto Suarez, vice president and secretary of the National Assembly respectively; Commander of the Revolution Guillermo Garcia Frias; and Alfredo Enrique Pinas, the first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba for Granma, were present at the creation of the Administrative Council.

The Administrative Council of Las Tunas Province will be formed this afternoon. Tomorrow, Holguin Province will follow suit, thereby concluding the process in the country.

Gen. Raul Castro Presides Over Promotion Ceremony

FL1604225593 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Army General Raul Castro, minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR], presided over the ceremony held at historic Morro Cabana Military Park to commemorate the 32d anniversary of the proclaiming of the socialist nature of our revolution, as well as Militiamen Day. Journalist Zenaida Costales has the details.

[Costales] As part of the ceremony, 32 reservists and an equal number of members of the Territorial Troops Militia [MTT] were promoted to the next higher rank.

Castro presented a replica of Generalissimo Maximo Gomez' machete to 13 prominent figures in the world of Cuban art and culture and five basic cultural institutions. First Lieutenant Eusebio Leal was promoted to the next higher rank by the FAR minister in a special ceremony. The following are excerpts from that moment:

[Begin recording] [Castro] It is traditional on such a day to promote, throughout the country, thousands of members of the MTT and of the regular reserves who were promoted symbolically, on this anniversary, the 32d of the proclaiming of the socialist nature of the revolution and the Day of the Militiamen. As I mentioned, 32 [as heard] militiamen and reservists were promoted.

There is a special promotion that we wanted to conduct apart from the solemn ceremony held on the parade grounds of the San Carlos de la Cabana Fort. The promotion order will be read by the second chief of the cadres directive [words indistinct].

[Unidentified speaker] Order by the Minister of the FAR: In light of fulfillment of the time-in-rank requirement in the present grade, and as a fair reward for his modest and dedicated personal performance in rescuing and preserving the highest values of the revolutionary and military history of our people, I decree, first, the promotion of 1st Lt. Eusebio Leal Spengler to the rank of captain. [end recording]

[Costales] After his promotion, the historian of the city of Havana made exclusive comments for this newscast:

[Begin Leal recording] I believe this is very generous on his part. Since 1986, a group of people has been working here. I am thinking of all of them now, the most important, who have worked thousands of hours here to reconstruct this very impressive and important piece of our history. For seven years they have unselfishly worked here. I believe that what was bestowed on me today is for all of them. [end recording]

Young People Surveyed on How 'They See Themselves'

FL1704160493 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 5 Apr 93

[Text] There are those who affirm that the young generation of the nineties is identified by bicycles as an icon of their times. What else identifies them? How do they see themselves? Journalist Grisel Perez went out in search of these answers.

[Begin recording] [Perez] Any one of them has had a first love, has played hooky, or has had to take on parental duties prematurely. For this reason the young generation

living in the nineties is similar to other generations, although it has its own identity. They range from 14 to 30 years of age. They can be seen in academics or in white and yellow uniforms. They also study in the universities or are technicians, athletes, soldiers, or workers. [passage indistinct]

[First unidentified speaker] We are from a different time. We have our own initiatives, our own lives. I do not have an opinion of my generation. I truly cannot assess it.

[Second unidentified speaker] I believe that the generation living in Cuba today is worthy of continuing the struggle. I believe this generation has a good future.

[Perez] They undertook the challenges brought on by the disappearance of the socialist bloc, the shortage of fuel, the rationing of food. They move around on bicycles, fill the squares, mobilize to agrarian tasks, walk the streets of Cuba.

[Third unidentified speaker] I believe we have to make a greater effort.

[Fourth unidentified speaker] We have to be more audacious and undertake more responsibilities, take things more seriously, work a bit harder.

[Perez] According to the polls, they live in a time when sexual initiation comes early; there are more abortions, and fewer babies are born. This is a time when few women opt to become housewives; common law marriage is increasing, and divorce is more frequent.

[Fifth unidentified speaker] This is a generation that also needs more poetry, a bit more encouragement, but is vital and can achieve a great deal.

[Sixth unidentified speaker] I am happy. I am happy.

[Seventh unidentified speaker] The most important thing is happiness, to become someone in life and particularly with sports, which I like most. To not feel defeated makes me happy.

[Eighth unidentified speaker] I give and receive a lot of love. Love is everything, love of friendship, love for life.

[Perez] This is the generation of the age of knowledge, a generation that is not afraid of debate and effortlessly participates in the government of its country.

[Ninth unidentified speaker] It could be said that it is a happy and profound generation. I can only say that I see a generation that is a consequence of the times it lives. I believe that is enough. [end recording]

Inter-Caribbean Affairs

Caricom's Carrington Warns Preferential Access on 'Its Last Leg'

FL1804212793 Bridgetown CANA in English 1702 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Report by Garfield Myers]

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, April 18, CANA—Secretary General of the Caribbean Community (Caricom) Edwin Carrington has warned Caribbean countries that preferential access to northern hemispheric markets is nearing its end.

In an increasingly globalised and competitive world, "preferential access to markets, whether in Europe or North America is on its last leg", said Carrington.

The secretary general's comments came during a panel discussion on the topic, "Caribbean Development in Light of Global Trends", part of a two-day conference at the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies (UWI), which ended Friday [16 April].

The conference was among activities attended by hundreds of Mona Campus graduates. The campus is celebrating its 45th anniversary.

Carrington said that for the first time in the history of the region, economic competitiveness and performance and not political negotiations would be the basis for its advancement.

He urged the development of the region's human resources through education and training and major shifts in thinking and perception of the world by Caribbean peoples.

Unity was one way to ensure survival in a future dominated by large economic blocs, added Carrington, who called for increased linkages between Caribbean Basin countries and strengthening of Caricom.

Another panelist, the United Nations Developmemt Programme (UNDP) representative in Jamaica, Dr. Denis Benn, warned of a possible reduction in scarce aid to Caribbean countries because of the end of the cold war, the collapse of communism and demands caused by crises in countries such as Somalia and the former Yugoslavia.

He advised the region's governments and private sectors to respond to global trends by fashioning a policy with a "long term development vision".

Dr. Trevor Munroe, head of the UWI's Department of Government, suggested reform of regional governments to better ensure provision of sociel welfare.

He called for the broadening of the tax base and the ensuring of tax compliance, especially among those at the higher income levels of the society as a means of providing resources for increased welfare services.

Barbados

Democratic Labor Party Calls For Purge To Weed Out Party 'Liabilities'

FL1804210893 Bridgetown CANA in English 1540 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Text] Bridgetown, Barbados, April 18, CANA—A spokesman for Barbados' ruling Democratic Labour Party (DLP) on Sunday called for an internal purge to "weed out those who have become liabilities to the party".

DLP public relations officer Reggie Hunte issued the call in reaction to a newspaper report last week indicating that some DLP backbenchers in Parliament, unhappy with Prime Minister Erskine Sandiford's leadership, were planning to agitate for change.

Hunte, writing in his weekly SUNDAY SUN newspaper column, said he had spoken to all but two of the DLP backbenchers and "was satisfied that whatever feelings they may have on certain matters, they ... do not have any intention to be part of any conspiratorial exercise to embarrass or bring down the government".

Since introducing unpopular austerity measures in late 1991 under a soon-ending International Monetary Fund stabilization programme, the DLP leadership has faced some opposition from the parliamentary backbench.

The most vocal has been former junior Finance Minister Harold Blackman who remains adamant that Prime Minister Sandiford should step down over his management of the economy.

Trade unionist Leroy Trotman also resigned as a DLP backbencher recently to become an independent MP. While Trotman said his decision stemmed from trade union commitments, there are clear indications he was unhappy with some of the government's policies and their adverse effects on Barbadian workers.

Hunte was severely critical of backbencher Johnny Tudor who was mentioned in the newspaper report. He said Tudor's name "keeps featuring whenever there is a matter of some negative reaction towards the DLP".

Hunte, saying the DLP had "morz than its fair share of (dead weight)", added "there is need to shed it".

He said in this period of recession, when unpopular measures had to be taken, government MPs should exercise leadership in their constituencies "and not make the people believe that something can be had for nothing".

Haiti

Lavalas Political Organization Maintains Call for Aristide Return

FL1604161493 Port-au-Prince Radio Tropic FM in Creole 1200 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] The Lavalas Political Organization, OPL, has again announced its determination to struggle for the return of democracy and constitutional order to the country. In a communique signed by Gerard Pierre-Charles, Yvelt Chery, and Chavannes Jean-Baptiste, the OPL advises that it maintains its call for resistance and mobilization, and demands President Aristide's physical return to Haiti as soon as possible.

The OPL forcefully denounces the violent repressions committed in the country since 29 March, in which the military have been persecuting the partisans of President Aristide. The organization demands that those in jail be immediately released or referred to the court.

The leaders of the OPL ask the representatives of the UN/OAS civilian mission to keep a more vigilant watch over the cases of repression.

Attorney Accuses Aristide of High Treason

FL1604164593 Port-au-Prince Radio Tropic FM in Creole 1200 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Attorney Mireille Durocher Bertin [former member of the private office of Prime Minister Jean-Jacques Honorat] has asked the Chamber of Deputies to indict President Jean-Bertrand Aristide whom she accuses of high treason and several violations of the Constitution. According to this, he would be liable to trial before the High Court of Justice. Bertin requires the Chamber of Deputies to accuse President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Further on Reaction to Prime Minister Bazin's Speech

Senate President Comments

FL1604210293 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1600 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Text] Among the reactions to Bazin's address on 13 April is that of the president of the Senate from the Alliance, who hails the statements made by Prime Minister Marc Bazin. Senator Thomas Eddy Dupiton thinks it logical that a national plan be submitted for resolution of the political crisis. Sen. Dupiton says that the parliament will play its constitutional role. Regarding possible solutions to the crisis, Sen. Dupiton notes that the parliament would be ready to vote the reestablishment of Father Aristide in his post if the negotiations lead to this formula. Let us listen to Thomas Eddy Dupiton, President of the Senate, of the Alliance bloc:

[Begin recording] [Dupiton, in Creole] [words indistinct] came before the nation with a defined problem: He was

charged with negotiating. He negotiated. He negotiated in taking all the parties into account. Because he told you that he did not enter alone. He wants all sectors to be a part, to be represented. When a solution to the crisis that is a political result is reached, it will be submitted to us for our sanction.

[Reporter, in Creole] We have noticed developing trends. For example, mediator Dante Caputo came here and did not meet with the parliamentarian bloc that you head; instead, he met with the opposing bloc. And information leaked that once Father Aristide is established as president, he would suggest a prime minister to the two presidents of the chambers, meaning Firmin Jean-Louis for the Senate of the Republic and Alexandre Medard for the Chamber of Deputies. What is your position on all that?

[Dupiton] From then on, only one thing could be noted: Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide would not really want to return, because he knows that the three state powers are functioning with great difficulty; because he asked for an embargo on the country and even asked for the arrival of forces. You, who love the country, you who believe you cannot take a position of bravado, you stay in the negotiation process because the country must come first. If he reaches that point, however, and, despite all the goodwill being shown, continues to bluff because he is not interested in coming back, that would be a serious problem. The three powers that are functioning know who is in charge and whom the country and state recognize. [end recording]

Deputies Georges, Norzeus Comment

FL1604205393 Port-au-Prince Tele-Haiti in Creole 1030 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Excerpts] Many reactions have been coming in after Prime Minister Marc Bazin's speech to the nation. If we go to the Haitian parliament, we see that several blocs within the parliament, including the Socialist Bloc and the Alliance for Parliamentary Cohesion [ACP], which supports the government, have made statements. They have not, however, had identical reactions.

In an open letter to Prime Minister Bazin, ACP deputies have expressed their satisfaction with the way he is working to help Haiti find a solution to the crisis. They say they see that, given the way he is working, he has respected the mandate entrusted to him. The ACP president, Deputy Pierre Simon Georges, says the alliance is ready to ratify the prime minister that President Jean-Bertrand Aristide will choose. We invite you to listen to Deputy Pierre Simon Georges at the microphone of Varrio Seran.

[Begin Georges recording] Given the seriousness of the crisis, the magnitude that it is gradually assuming, a wise solution must be adopted. I believe that the solution proposed by the government on 13 April is a wise solution, a wise solution [repeats] that is also a political solution.

As everyone knows, many ACP members, not to say the majority, have always (?suggested) the application of Article 148 [corrects himself] of Article 149 instead. The Villa d'Accueil agreement virtually destroyed, however, Article 149, which was a constitutional solution replaced by a political solution. The Villa d'Accueil agreement was a political solution. Still within the scope of this political solution, the acknowledgement of the legitimacy of the president elected on 16 December 1990 falls within this political solution.

As [ACP] president, I think that all ACP members (?have) to ratify the choice of a prime minister who will supposedly be chosen, in complete independence, by President Aristide in compliance with the Constitution and jointly with the presidents of the two chambers. [passage omitted] [end recording]

That was Deputy Pierre Simon Georges speaking. Deputy Patrick Norzeus does not hold, however, the same opinion of Bazin's speech. He says it is a speech marking the end of a reign. He adds that President Aristide has always been a constitutional president, that he has never lost his legitimacy, and that Bazin's speech is worthless. We invite you to listen to the opinions of the deputy.

[Begin Norzeus recording] In my opinion, it is a speech marking the end of a reign, a speech marking the end of a reign and marked by citizen Marc Bazin's willingness to save face. After all his stupidities, after all his ugly actions, Bazin has deceived and betrayed democracy. He has betrayed all democrats like us who, after 7 February 1986, wanted to establish a new (?democracy) in Haiti.

President Aristide was elected on 16 December 1990. He remains the president of the Republic of Haiti. It is as such that he went twice to the United Nations. It is as such that he went to all [as heard] great international summits. It is as such that he was received as head of state by various governments and other heads of state in the world. It is as such that the president of the United States received him as a counterpart so recently, on 16 March. I do not believe there was ever a question of not acknowledging the legitimacy of Aristide's Presidency. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Jamaica

Labor Party Files Petition Challenging Election Results

FL1804214193 Bridgetown CANA in English 1937 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, April 18, CANA—The opposition Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) has filed the first of what is expected to be several petitions challenging results in the March 30 general election here.

Anthony Johnson, a JLP deputy leader, who contested the North East St Catherine seat in the election, has asked the Supreme Court to unseat Phyllis Mitchell of the ruling People's National Party (PNP).

Johnson is claiming widespread irregularities in the conduct of the poll in the constituency on election day - a claim the opposition party has made for the country as a whole.

The JLP was expected to finally end with between eight or nine of the 60 parliamentary seats.

While initially conceding that the PNP would have won the elections in any event, JLP leader Edward Seaga and his party have been complaining of "massive fraud" in the poll by the governing party.

Seaga has demanded an enquiry into the elections headed by Chief Justice Edward Zacca.

If the enquiry was not held, Seaga said, JLP members would attend only the required number of parliamentary sessions to ensure their seats were not declared vacant.

Neither would he name the eight opposition senators, Seaga said.

On election night, and subsequently, PNP leader and Prime Minister P.J. Patterson decried the intimidation and fraud that has long been a feature of elections here - largely in the so-called garrison constituencies where either party enjoys fanatical support.

Patterson said he intended to make the recent election the last in which violence occured and pledged voting reform, including the introduction of electronic voting.

St. Kitts and Nevis

Opposition Requests Dismissal of Voter Registration Officers

FL1804212393 Bridgetown CANA in English 1647 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Text] Basseterre, St. Kitts, April 18, CANA—The official opposition St. Kitts-Nevis Labour Party (SKNLP) has written Electoral Commission Chairman Charles Wilkin requesting the urgent dismissal of two voter registration officers.

The officers in question are Cecil and Claude Edwards, the father and uncle of Erstein Edwards, a ruling People's Action Movement (PAM) candidate for the next general elections. Both men have been registration officers since 1984.

In the letter, SKNLP leader Dr Denzil Douglas mentioned that Cecil Edwards had played an active and high profile role in the ruling party's public presentation of his son as an election candidate.

"The Labour Party feels very strongly that the continuation of Cecil Edwards and Claude Edwards as registration officers undermines public confidence in and respect for the electoral process and violates the spirit of our electoral laws which are based on fairness and impartiality," said the parliamentary opposition leader.

"Fairness and impartiality, like justice, must not only be done but must be seen to be done," the SKNLP leader told the Electoral Commission chairman.

Wilkin has replied to Dr Douglas, informing him that a meeting of the Electoral Commission has been scheduled to discuss his representations. He promised further communication promptly after the meeting.

Trinidad and Tobago

Trade Unions Federation Warns of General Strike

FL1804215393 Bridgetown CANA in English 1801 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Text] Port of Spain, Trinidad, April 18, CANA—A federation of Trinidad and Tobago trade unions has issued a warning to the government that hardships expected from the floating of the T&T dollar and other government policies, make a general strike "more likely and imminent."

The National Trade Union Centre (Natuc) said last week's floating of the T&T dollar and the resulting 35 per cent devaluation, had dire consequences for [words indistinct] prices of foodstuff have been increased. The effect of this would be to cause great increased hardships on the poor and working people," Natuc said in a statement.

It added: "The over 100,000 unemployed people, those recently retrenched or 'voluntarily' severed, those to be retrenched, the pensioners and others on fixed incomes, single parent households especially those headed by women, public sector employees who have had a virtual wage freeze since 1984....., will all see their standard of living further devastated."

Stating the trade union movement could not accept this latest move by the government, Natuc said the negative impact of the floating the T&T dollar decision would far outweigh the positives.

"We do not believe that any of the objectives (growth, more employment, a boost to manufacturers) will in fact occur. What we do believe will happen is that there will be a redistribution of the national cake to the advantage of the elite few and the disadvantage of the majority of the people."

In addition, Natuc said local farmers would be adversely affected as the costs of seeds, fertilizers and chemicals were expected to increase, while manufacturers who use substantial imported inputs would be forced to increase prices and consequently lose sales.

"Interest rates will rise, thereby further aggravating the situation and affecting small businesses in particular."

Natuc said the major [word indistinct] of the T&T dollar and its depreciation were the oil companies Amoco and Texaco and other multinational corporations doing business in the country.

Salinas Cited on Attaining Fiscal Surplus

PA1704142?93 Mexico City Canal 13 Television Network in Spanish 1215 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Report by Jaime Guerrero in Coahuila]

[Text] President Carlos Salinas de Gortari stated on 16 April that Mexico is heading in the right direction to attain a fiscal surplus for the second consecutive year, accomplish its inflationary target, and at the same time maintain its economic growth dynamics despite the figures recorded in the international economy.

During a luncheon with local businessmen, the president said that the March inflation index of .6 percent is encouraging. In this respect, he said that the battle against inflation will be his first priority.

[Begin Salinas recording] The inflation index was lower in March than that recorded in the United States for the same period. That is a clear confirmation that prices in our country are headed in the direction we set to attain single digit inflation in 1993. [end recording]

He added that the fiscal surplus and the public finance reorganization, with the drop in inflation, has created the necessary framework that has enabled private investment to continue growing by 10 percent in real growth with each passing year. This, in turn, has allowed the state to funnel more resources to the social sector and other priority areas.

President Salinas acknowledged that there are challenges in the process of economic recovery but added that not one of the Mexican states will be excluded from the transformation.

[Begin Salinas recording] If our Mexico is undergoing transformations, it is the federal government's main objective that no state or region will be excluded from these transformations. [end recording]

Again during a ceremony that took place in Saltillo, President Salinas de Gortari referred to the social sector and said that democracy will be the only voice of the Mexican people.

[Begin Salinas recording] Let the Mexican people express themselves through democracy. [end recording]

The president announced that 400 million pesos will be channeled to the region to be invested in social projects. He inaugurated a [word indistinct] in Ramos Arizpe, a sports complex in Saltillo, and met with several solidarity committees in the area. Afterward, the president visited Coahuila and a very colorful reception was given in his honor in San Pedro de las Colonias. He subsequently inaugurated several factories that represent additional employment for the region.

Negotiators Agree To Implement NAFTA in Jan 1994

PA1704010093 Mexico City Canal 13 Television Network in Spanish 1215 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Report by Patricia Gutierrez]

[Text] The North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA] negotiators on supplementary matters have clarified their positions and will start to draft the agreements. The officials stated that the negotiations in Mexico will allow the trilateral agreement to be implemented in January 1994.

Herminio Blanco of Mexico, John Weekes of Canada, and Rufus Yerxa of the United States have stated that the negotiations on the supplementary NAFTA agreements, which are being held in Mexico, have been useful and constructive and will allow the implementation of the trilateral agreement in January 1994. The negotiators called a news conference to report their advances in matters related to labor, the environment, and protection [salvaguarda].

The Mexican representative explained that they negotiated cooperation mechanisms, not wage rates or labor laws. He reported that the issue of protection was broached but that this does not mean the treaty was reopened for debate. The next phase, he said, is the drafting of the legal texts.

[Begin Blanco recording] During the meetings, we clarified several matters to help draft the legal documents. [end recording]

Rufus Yerxa insisted on the creation of a supranational commission to ensure the implementation of the agreements that he defined as follows:

[Begin Yerxa recording, in English fading to Spanish translation] We want to have mechanisms in place to ensure these agreements will be implemented correctly and ensure the efforts that the governments are making to ensure compliance with these agreements in keeping with the law are tacit. [end recording]

Canada's John Weekes admitted there are still differences:

[Begin Weekes recording, in English fading to Spanish translation] I think it is normal in any negotiation of this sort, especially in this stadium [estadio]. There could be some differences, but I think nothing serious. It is well known there are different viewpoints and different ways to handle these topics. [end recording]

Following the news conference, the representatives of each country resumed negotiating. This process could conclude on 16 April.

Commerce Secretary Says NAFTA Talks on Schedule

PA1804001493 Mexico City XHTV Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Report by Lourdes Esquivel Llantara]

[Text] Dr. Jaime Serra Puche, commerce and industrial development secretary, has inaugurated in Mexico City the Regional Advisory Councils for the North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA]. He said the NAFTA negotiations are moving along on schedule.

Serra Puche said Mexico, the United States, and Canada will combine their parallel NAFTA agreements into a single text.

[Begin Serra Puche recording] The three countries will hold a technical meeting in the first week of May to combine the three proposals, the Mexican, Canadian, and U.S. texts regarding environmental and labor matters, into a single document. [end recording]

In a message delivered to participants at the first national meeting of the Regional Advisory Councils for NAFTA, he said another meeting of the negotiation chiefs will be held, probably in Canada, during the week of 10 May. The elimination of the so-called (Corchetes) will begin there and the consolidated text of the parallel agreements will also be edited.

[Begin Serra Puche recording] We are working toward consolidating a text and the achievement of specific results in the next few weeks. [end recording]

He said the processes for ratifying the treaties and negotiating parallel agreements are moving according to schedule so NAFTA may be implemented by 1 January 1994. Serra Puche said Mexico believes the parallel agreements must be compatible with the text of the treaty. The agreements should not lead to barriers against the trade of goods and services and should respect Mexican, U.S., and Canadian sovereignty.

Mr. Serra proposed that on 16 April the Advisory Council for NAFTA should be turned into an advisory council for the negotiation of all international treaties signed by Mexico.

Pemex, Transport Secretariat Sign Agreement

PA1804012093 Mexico City XHTV Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Report by Claudia Flores Barreto; passages in quotation marks recorded]

[Text] In the next three years Mexican Petroleum [Pemex] land transportation equipment will not exceed five years of use, according to an agreement signed by Pemex and the Communication and Transport Secretariat.

Mr. Emilio Gamboa Patron, communications and transport secretary, and Pemex Director Francisco Rojas signed three cooperation agreements between Pemex and the land transportation sector. These agreements show there are honest labor relations between the two sectors. The agreement confirms the commitment to purchase new equipment so in the next three years Pemex will not have any transportation equipment more than five years old.

[Rojas] "That is why this ceremony is an example of the overall characteristics of the modernization process in which we are working."

Mr. Gamboa Patron talked about the job done by Pemex, saying that it contributes to the nation's progress.

[Gamboa] "It is an enterprise that fills us with pride. The company is an example of honesty and efficiency."

Gamboa talked about the situation Mexico is facing:

[Gamboa] "There are demands we can no longer disregard. Without a doubt we need communication and transportation systems that can not only take us to the most remote areas but that are also quicker, safer, and more efficient."

He talked about the Communications and Transport Secretariat's commitments and said the rural road program will be strengthened:

[Gamboa] "We intend to finish the projects already under way so in the short term we can include all communities into the development promoted by all Mexicans."

Costa Rica

Foreign Minister on Reduction of Aid to Developing Countries

PA1604145593 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1730 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Statement by Foreign Minister Bernd Niehaus Quesada at the Foreign Ministry Building in San Jose on 15 April—recorded; broadcast in progress]

[Text] ...the importance of Western aid to Russia. The Costa Rican Government is pleased this is so, but it points out this should never happen at the expense of the assistance provided to the former Third World countries, the developing countries. The decision made a few days ago to increase or provide $28 billion in aid to the Russian Federation must not in any way be viewed as a reduction of aid to the Third World, but unfortunately this is what is happening.

We are making an urgent plea to the international community here, and we will also do so at all international and regional forums. A very dangerous situation is looming, which will lead to a deepening of the disparities between the developed countries and the Third World countries. U.S. developmental aid, for instance, is being reduced; that is, 60 percent of that aid is being funneled to Russia, which reduces aid by 60 percent to the developing countries. Russia is not receiving new aid; the aid we used to get is being taken away from us and given to Russia. These countries are taking 60 percent of that aid. We must keep in mind the remaining 40 percent of that aid goes chiefly to Israel and Egypt. There is practically nothing remaining of U.S. aid for developing countries. If markets for our export products are closed at the same time, where does that leave us? At zero. The situation is very grave. When the cold war ended, when the Berlin Wall fell, the developed countries repeatedly stated this was not going to happen. They said on many occasions that the aid or assistance Western Europe and other non-European countries were going to give Eastern Europe countries, an aid that is welcome, would be financed from new sources. This aid was not going to be granted at the expense of the aid we receive.

The exact opposite is true, which is very serious. We insist and believe we must bring this matter up before international organizations. We insist this situation is very serious, as it will hamper international cooperation and relations in a very short time.

Minister Outlines Policies To Promote Tourism

PA1604183393 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 0100 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Tourism Minister Luis Manuel Chacon has said tourism has become the number one generator of wealth and employment, which is why a series of innovative and aggressive policies were implemented at the start of the current administration. During a ceremony at the Americo Salazar Theater attended by President Rafael Angel Calderon, Chacon outlined the four goals set to achieve the aforementioned result: to consolidate the name of Costa Rica in the international tourism market; to double the number of available rooms to meet demand; to increase significantly foreign exchange revenue; and to make it possible for tourism activities to perform a truly social function.

The actions conducted to improve tourism and offer better services to foreign tourists as well as those to restructure the Costa Rican Tourism Institute made it possible to increase flights to and from Costa Rica by 53.2 percent from 1989 to 1992. In addition, tourism has had a major positive impact on the country as investments in tourism have risen from 16 percent in 1989 to 140.6 percent in 1992.

Tourism in the country represents 22.7 percent of total exports, meaning it generates 62,056 direct jobs and 61,972 indirect jobs, according to EC statistics. In addition, tourism performs a major social function, which is why the current administration has striven to enhance its multiplying effect, Chacon said. All the actions of this sector have fallen within the framework of the presidential proclamation on the new ecological order, and for that reason wildlife areas and natural resources are protected at all times, something that in turn strengthens an ecological culture.

President Calderon Fournier said the positive results the country has achieved in this sector are part of the government's joint effort with the private sector. He was pleased with the tourism sector's valuable contribution to the national economy, since it has helped Costa Rica have a better standard of living and foster a climate trust for foreign investors. In addition, it has generated thousands of new jobs. Calderon Fournier said it is necessary to maintain the effort with the goal of upgrading the level of services and possibilities of new opportunities for tourists visiting us.

Commentary Urges Ratification of SICA

PA1704145993 San Jose LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 12 Apr 93 p 18

[Commentary by Helio Fallas: "Costa Rica Before Central America"]

[Text] SICA [Central American Information Service] constitutes the institutional framework of Central American regional integration. Its fundamental objective is to reconcile the continent in order to "establish it as a region of peace, liberty, democracy, and development."

The SICA seeks to reaffirm the following principles: "consolidate democracy and strengthen its institutions based on the existence of governments elected by free and secret suffrage, as well as an unrestricted respect for human rights"; bring about a new national security model based on the promotion of a civilian society and the defeat of extreme poverty; promote a vast system of

liberty to ensure the improvement of the individual and society; "accomplish a regional system of economic welfare and justice for all nations"; and so forth.

On the other hand, it is necessary to point out that among the Organization of Central American States modifications, there is one that creates the "Consultative Committee... formed by business, labor, academic, and other productive sectors of the country... and representatives of the economic, social, and cultural sectors..." This has made the establishment of the Central American Committee of Intersector Coordination, formed by groups representing the Central American nongovernmental sectors, possible since 23 July 1992.

SICA represents a crucial instrument for the coordination and execution of principles and actions in matters related to human rights, social liberties and suffrage, economic development, and social justice. Costa Rica has struggled through these issues for many years at the expense of several generations. Despite this, we have never felt completely satisfied with our accomplishments.

That is why it is appropriate to reaffirm that our country's responsibility toward Central America did not end with the encouragement of a peace plan for the region. A peace plan that earned Dr. Oscar Arias a Nobel Peace Prize. In fact, that should have been the beginning of a new integral and coherent gesture by our country toward our Central American brothers as it relates to political, economic, and social development. Due to fundamental ethical imperatives, our disregard of Central American countries that are starting to tread through the difficult path of democracy with social justice, would be unpardonable. Our country's cooperation, in the broadest sense, could inclusively enrich our accomplishments in certain fields. At the same time we could enrich ourselves with aspects unique to the culture of those countries.

In this context, it is worthwhile to ask ourselves the following question: What justification does Costa Rica have for not ratifying the SICA, 15 months after it was signed by the presidents of the region? It is never too late to promote actions that will benefit our brother countries, and at the same time serve to reinforce our national values.

El Salvador

Foreign Minister on Amnesty for Killers of U.S. Marines

PA1704161293 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 16 Apr 93 pp 3, 9

[Text] It was officially announced that international treaties prevent granting amnesty to the individuals charged with the "Zona Rosa Massacre," in which five U.S. Marines, two U.S. businessmen, and six other persons were killed.

Foreign Minister Manuel Pacas Castro stated William Felix Rivas Bolanos and Juan Antonio Lucero, who were sentenced by a court for this attack, will not be granted amnesty because the victims of their attack include foreign advisers, who are protected by those treaties.

Rivas Bolanos and Lucero were sentenced to 25 years in jail for participating in the terrorist group that entered two restaurants in Zona Rosa in San Benito neighborhood and shot the foreigners on 19 June 1985.

At that time, the Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers (PRTC), a member of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, claimed credit for the killings.

The so-called "Truth Commission," created by the United Nations to investigate these attacks, merely said the PRTC committed the crimes. It did not, however, specify the names of the individuals who committed the crime, as it did in other cases.

Pacas Castro explained that the four U.S. Marines who were killed belonged to the security corps of the U.S. Embassy, therefore, "they were protected by the international treaties."

The foreign minister emphasized that "the amnesty law cannot go beyond the international treaties."

The minister also said that his office is studying if the international treaties can be applied to those accused of killing two U.S. soldiers after a group of terrorists shot down their helicopter in Lolotique, San Miguel on 2 January 1991.

Dinora Andrade, Chinameca Lower Court judge, who is in charge of the case against Severiano Fuentes and Ferman Hernandez, explained that she has turned the case over to the Foreign Ministry so it can determine if amnesty can be applied according to the international agreements.

Omas Pastor, lawyer for the former guerrillas, insists that the U.S. soldiers—Colonel David H. Pickett and Corporal Earnest Dawson—did not live in El Salvador but were stationed at Soto Cano Base in Honduras, therefore, "they cannot be protected by the international guarantees." Pastor added that the two men were not accredited as diplomats.

According to the report, Hernandez and Fuentes reportedly killed the soldiers "for mercy."

On the other hand, the foreign minister assured that the Army purge is an issue "that will soon be removed from the UN agenda." At the same time, he reiterated that the government is complying with the recommendations made by the "Truth Commission" that do not violate the Constitution of the Republic.

The foreign minister added that the UN secretary general has already informed the Security Council on the new calendar presented by the Salvadoran Government

for completing the implementation of the recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Commission, which has been questioned by the various sectors and the Salvadoran Army itself.

According to Dr. Pacas Castro, the "Truth Commission's" recommendation of imposing a ban on the political rights of certain persons is not only contrary to the Constitution, but is contrary to the "spirit and the letter of the peace agreements" that were signed by the government and the FMLN in January 1992.

Vice President Discusses Role of Onusal

PA1704165593 San Salvador Radio Farabundo Marti Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Salvadoran Vice President Francisco Merino stated that the mission of UN Observers for El Salvador [Onusal] is to verify the peace agreements and not to make recommendations on the performance of the Supreme Court of Justice. Merino said Onusal should reevaluate its role given that its sixth report recommended reforms to the Supreme Court of Justice. Merino added that Onusal's mission is to verify actions in the peace agreements and not to make recommendations. Here is what Vice President Merino said:

[Begin Merino recording] Onusal's mission on human rights in El Salvador should take into account its mandate. One of the first issues taken up with Augusto Ramirez Ocampo [Onusal representative], who has recently arrived, is precisely the revision of the mandates, in this case, the human rights commissions. A clear and specific mandate is the verification of the agreements and the verification of actions to improve the judicial system. It is a totally different mandate to recommend on these matters. By clearly establishing this, we will avoid....[pauses] Let me put it this way—excessive actions that are not provided in their mandate. [end recording]

Merino pointed out that the Truth Commission's recommendations have been applied, particularly those referring to the Supreme Court of Justice. Merino added that President Alfredo Cristiani had already sent his comments to the UN secretary general regarding the recommendations, while Merino expressed his regret that foreigners are telling the Salvadoran people what they have to do.

[Begin Merino recording] The president sent the UN secretary general his views on the Truth Commission's recommendations, which are quite precise regarding the judicial system. The president also sent his proposal on revisions to these recommendations taking into account the Constitution, the Executive Branch's mandate, and the spirit of the peace agreements. As a result, the United Nations will be able to promote, subsequently, a meeting between the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] and the government to discuss any views on any given matter. The agreements, which the FMLN signed, establish that the Constitution's limits could not be exceeded. So, if it is demonstrated certain recommendations exceed the Constitution's limits, these would be excluded from forced compliance. The Executive Branch only has the power to modify matters under its authority. The Executive Branch can, at the most, promote, foster, and negotiate with those responsible for those actions. Nevertheless, it should be clearly understood that the Executive Branch cannot impose its decision on matters that are not under its authority. The Supreme Court of Justice has improved the quality and quantity of the judicial system. In addition, initiatives had already been taken for legal reforms that would strengthen the judicial system even before the agreements. The UN secretary general will receive this document next week. This has been a very professional and technical effort that was being developed in consultation with diverse sectors. We had to wait for certain documents, meanwhile, time passed and the agreements were signed. Now it seems we cannot make reforms until someone from the outside tells us what to do. [end recording]

Supreme Court President Mauricio Gutierrez Castro said it was not an error to create the Truth Commission—it was a stupidity. This remark, said Vice President Merino, demonstrates that there is total democracy in the nation.

[Begin Merino recording] In our country there is full democracy and this guarantees that any citizen can think and express his opinion freely. We do not anticipate any repercussions from this comment, as the Judicial Branch is completely autonomous and independent. Therefore, the comment has no direct repercussions. I believe politicians must understand that if they do not change their tune and if they continue fostering confrontation, the people—the voters—will not consider them. [end recording]

The vice president made these statements after he inaugurated a forum on socioeconomic development in the country.

FMLN To Seek Solution for Members Imprisoned in Murder Cases

PA1704031493 San Salvador Radio Farabundo Marti Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] The Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] will approach the U.S. Embassy in El Salvador in an attempt to find a favorable solution for the FMLN members imprisoned for the Zona Rosa and Lolotique helicopter murder cases. According to Leonel Gonzalez, FMLN representative at the National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace [Copaz], it is not fair that the murderers of the Jesuit priests have been set free through the amnesty while guerrilla combatants, who acted within the legitimate framework of the war, remain jailed. Here is what Gonzalez said:

[Begin Gonzalez recording] In my opinion, this amnesty cannot be applied only to one sector. How is it possible

that those who murdered the Jesuit priests have benefited from the amnesty, while those comrades who acted within the legitimate framework of the war, such as the case of the advisers who died in the helicopter [over Lolotique], are still jailed. This is a great injustice. This is why we believe.... [pauses] We are going to fight this legally and politically. We are also going to send letters to the U.S. Embassy to see if an agreement can be reached so the amnesty can be granted to our comrades who are incarcerated for the Zona Rosa case and those comrades involved in the downing of the helicopter. [end recording]

Humanitarian organizations have charged that the U.S. Administration is pressuring for those accused in the Zona Rosa murder case and those accused of the murder of the military advisers in Lolotique not to be included in the amnesty.

The FMLN considers the decreeing of the amnesty immediately after the Truth Commissions report was made public a serious error. Nevertheless, for Leonel Gonzalez, amnesty cannot be applied only to one sector, such as the military. The FMLN leader made these statements at the start of a Copaz meeting during which the implementation of the Truth Commission's recommendations were to be discussed.

According to Leonel Gonzalez it is urgent for Copaz to reply today on the government's noncompliance with the recommendations. The FMLN already has presented a number of proposals to reform the Constitution so as to facilitate the application of the Truth Commission's conclusions, Gonzalez added.

Land Mines To Be Removed From Guazapa Hill

PA1604162593 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1200 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] A group of UN specialists assisted by the Army, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN], and the Belgian private sector will begin removing land mines from Guazapa Hill. Former rebel Commander Mario Alberto Mijango will locate the buried mines, and the foreign experts will destroy them. Mijango said more than 4,000 mines were planted on the slopes of Guazapa Hill and have not yet been removed.

The FMLN said there are 10,000 mines of various types buried in 17 areas that were under guerrilla control during the war. In the case of Guazapa Hill, which was one of the main guerrilla strongholds, the mine fields prevented the Army from ejecting the rebels from their positions in that area.

The mine-defusing process in the conflict areas, which began in March in San Vicente, will end in August and cost the international community $7 million.

Guatemala

Government Rejects OAS Human Rights Report

PA1704034993 Guatemala City PRENSA LIBRE in Spanish 16 Apr 93 p 3

[Text] The Guatemalan Government on 15 April rejected the annual report released by the OAS Inter-American Human Rights Commission [CIDH], which underlines the increased number of human rights violations in Guatemala.

Foreign Minister Gonzalo Menendez Park said on 15 April that the government disagrees with the "observations, value judgments, and facts" noted in the report, and is preparing a response.

The OAS apprised the Guatemalan Government of its report on 12 March and the Foreign Ministry has until May to issue a response for later consideration by the CIDH.

Menendez Park did not delve deeply into the contents of the report, but asserted that "for the report to be complete the commission must conclude its in situ visit to Guatemala" on a date agreed upon between the CIDH and the government.

According to Menendez Park, the report attributes to the government actions that are "far from reality," including the murder of anthropologist Myrna Mack Chang and American Michael Devine.

On 14 April the annual report unleashed a controversy behind closed doors at the OAS and prompted certain missions to attempt to modify its contents or keep it secret, according to media reports. The report basically points out human rights violations in Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Peru.

Company Discovers New Oil Well in Peten Department

PA1604141493 Guatemala City PRENSA LIBRE in Spanish 14 Apr 93 p 3

[Text] Energy and Mines Minister Cesar Augusto Fernandez reported on 13 April that the Basic Company has discovered a new oil well in the Actun area in northern Peten Department. The well produces 1,500 barrels of crude oil per day.

The minister said oil exploration and exploitation tasks have been undertaken by different international companies and that petroleum is being exploited on a large scale.

"Some months ago we invited oil producing countries to work in the northern area and the results have been favorable," he added.

He also said that, before carrying out the oil extracting activities, environmental impact studies have been made, as established by law, and the requirements for

well drilling in that area—considered part of the cultural patrimony—have been met.

The official also reported that the commission studying the draft bill for the liberalization of fuel prices will meet during the week of 12 April while the hydrocarbons compensation fund still has resources available.

Currently, propane gas, as well as gasoline, are still subsidized since they produce a very slim margin of economic profit, said Fernandez. We foresee the compensation fund lasting until we liberalize the fuel prices but, if it does not, we will issue an extension, he explained.

Bomb Explosions Leave One Injured, Property Damage

PA1704165993 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1439 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] Guatemala City, 17 Apr (ACAN-EFE)—A security guard was injured and extensive property damage was reported as a result of terrorist bomb attacks carried out on the night of 16 April, firefighters reported on 17 April.

The first bomb exploded at a shopping center on Jose Milla Avenue in the capital, where branches of the Guatemalan Power Enterprise, of the Banco de los Trabajadores, and of the Guatemalan Telecommunications Enterprise (Guatel) operate.

The explosion injured the Guatel security guard, identified as Juan Miguel Garcia Gonzalez, 24.

The second attack took place at El Castano Shopping Center, in the southwestern part of the city, and the third attack took place in Molino de la Flores neighborhood, south of the city.

The explosions took place almost simultaneously and left extensive property damage, according to the sources.

No group has claimed responsibility for the explosions and no reasons were given for the attacks, although they are thought to be due to the recent 40 percent increase in electricity bills.

On 16 April, dozens of labor union workers marched down the most important streets of the capital to reject the increase in electricity rates.

The attacks took place when Guatemalan Indian Rigoberta Menchu, Nobel peace prize winner, is visiting her country and when the government and the guerrillas are negotiating the end of the armed conflict.

Honduras

Armed Forces Commander General Views Ad Hoc Commission Report

PA1704231693 Tegucigalpa Telesistema Hondureno Television Network in Spanish 0300 GMT 16 Apr 93

["Exclusive" interview with Division General Luis Alonso Discua, Armed Forces commander general, by Carlos Ridel and Edgardo Melgar in the station studio—live]

[Excerpts] [Discua] Good evening, Honduran television viewers. It is a great pleasure to be on a program that is so widely seen and heard. It is a pleasure to greet you, and let us hope this program will clarify certain situations in our institution.

[Ridel] Thank you, General. Good evening, Edgardo.

[Melgar] Good evening, Carlos. Good evening, General.

[Ridel] General, we have learned of the Ad Hoc Commission's proposals. In your view, what is its most important recommendation?

[Discua] The high level Ad Hoc Commission has made institutional reform recommendations to guarantee security and social peace in Honduras. The recommendations are very important and crucial for Honduras' political and social history. The recommendations cover aspects with which it is the institution's responsibility to comply. We note, for example, the Department of National Investigation [DIN], the lower military courts, and all the police corps. This report makes recommendations to the president in his role as commander in chief of the institution and to me as commander general of the Armed Forces. These recommendations will be acted upon in accordance with the timeframe allowed and following the report's main points.

[Melgar] What can the Honduran people expect from the Armed Forces following the Ad Hoc Commission's conclusions?

[Discua] The Armed Forces has begun a reorganization process to better guide the institution toward a national identity. Our institution is working on plans for the year 2000 that include a series of internal reorganization steps that involve all levels within the institution. [passage omitted]

[Ridel] General, was eliminating the DIN from the Armed Forces a joint decision?

[Discua] Definitely. This was...[pauses] Three officers participated in the Ad Hoc Commission. They presented their views, and this was discussed and an agreement reached. As a Honduran, as the Armed Forces commander, and as an officer, I view this decision as very proper because the DIN has been accused, and that has

led to the creation of this commission. Now the president will decide how the Criminal Investigation Department will be composed.

[Melgar] If this was a joint decision, who made it? Was it the Armed Forces command, Gen. Discua Elvir, or the Senior Council of the Armed Forces [Cosuffaa]?

[Discua] Cosuffaa issued its communique about 30 days ago. One part of the communique states that any decision made by the Armed Forces Command has Cosuffaa's support.

[Ridel] As Armed Forces commander general, did you not try to exert your influence on the DIN case with the Ad Hoc Commission?

[Discua] No way. I never had any influence on the Ad Hoc Commission. The Ad Hoc Commission was completely independent from any military interference by my command. [passage omitted]

[Ridel] Gen. Discua, we are very concerned about the nation's drug problem. Do you believe there are drug cartels operating in Honduras?

[Discua] One of the Honduran Armed Forces' priority strategic objectives is to combat and control effectively drug trafficking. The Armed Forces has made great efforts to control and avoid drug trafficking in Honduras. Drug trafficking is a scourge that degenerates a society so much it could have effects that would damage Honduran society as a whole. The Armed Forces is making an effort with positive results. Of course, all government departments should contribute toward this goal, especially the Health, Education, and Government Ministries and all those departments that can prevent not only drug trafficking but also drug abuse.

Drug trafficking is a movement that forcefully passes through our country on its way to the north. The sea, air, and land routes pass through Honduran territory. The movement has been substantially controlled with the support of the U.S. Government as they have set up a radar that detects aircraft and ship movements. Nevertheless, land traffic can increase through Honduran territory. That is what the Armed Forces have tried to avoid. The Armed Forces have supported the central government's programs at all times. We, as subordinates of the president of the Republic, support all programs to combat drug trafficking.

[Ridel] According to the investigations being conducted, do you think drug cartels are operating in Honduras?

[Discua] Anything is possible as there has been a shift in drug trafficking activity from Mexico to Central America; that is, to Guatemala, Belize, and Honduras. The north Atlantic coast and the Bahia Islands, Cortez, Atlantida, Colon, and Gracias a Dios Departments in particular could be involved in this drug trafficking. One cannot rule out the possibility that money laundering could be taking place along with drug trafficking. That is a very serious and difficult matter. Drug trafficking could generate a violent situation here in both the short and medium term.

[Melgar] Is money laundering going on in Honduras?

[Discua] There could be money laundering. I do not have confirmed information, but where there is drug trafficking all the associated crimes are present.

[Melgar] What levels has drug trafficking reached in political, business, and military circles?

[Discua] Taking as an example, taking as an example [repeats] the nations where drug trafficking has had a great influence such as Colombia, Peru, currently Guatemala, and Mexico, no sector of society has escaped that influence. Therefore, no sector that favors their criminal activity, be it political, governmental, or the Armed Forces, is exempt from infiltration by the tentacles of drug trafficking. In other words, compared to what is happening in other countries, the same things you mentioned could be happening in Honduras. I cannot confirm it because there is no specific information. Nevertheless, one cannot rule out the possibility that an attempt is being made to infiltrate the groups that make up Honduran society at all levels. Drug trafficking moves so much money; it is an operation that moves millions. The statistics given in millions of dollars on the amounts that drug trafficking moves in countries such as Mexico or in the Latin American region are so large that they almost equal some Latin American nations' budgets. [passage omitted]

[Ridel] Gen. Discua, let us talk about the Army's future. What is your opinion about the claim that Honduras should not have such a large Army?

[Discua] Honduras does not have the kind of Army people claim. If we assessed the region's balance of forces, the military balance, we would realize that Honduras has the smallest army in Central America. An official of an international organization made a statement that caught my attention. He said it was impossible for the Honduran Armed Forces to survive with the budget it has.

I would like to note that the Armed Forces' budget has not grown due to devaluation and inflation. I would say its budget has dropped more than 50 percent. In other words, as the president pointed out, it is the sector whose budget has dropped most drastically. Its current budget is virtually down to zero in relation to the GNP. International financial organizations have said the Armed Forces' budget should be 1 percent of GNP. The Honduran Armed Forces' budget is less that 1 percent of GNP. Thus the Honduran Armed Forces does not consume a large portion of the GNP.

[Melgar] We were talking about recommendations on ways to reduce the size of the Armed Forces. How profound have the differences been between you and U.S. Ambassador Arcos?

[Discua] No, Dr. Arcos and I have never had any differences. We have always had an excellent relationship. We have discussed various topics, including this one. We know the current U.S. policy is to reduce its armed forces. We do not have sophisticated defense weapons in Honduras. Our Armed Forces exists for defensive purposes only. Dr. Arcos and I have never had differences about that. On the contrary, our conversations have always been cordial. We have always had a good, cordial relationship. Of course, there have been attempts to publicize alleged differences....

[Ridel, interrupting] What about his statement that justice was like a serpent that either bit boots or not?

[Discua] Sometimes interviewers are able to make interviewees say certain things. The U.S. ambassador made that statement, and we discussed it. His relationship with the armed institution, however, has never been strained.

[Melgar] Because of the reduction in U.S. aid to the Honduran Armed Forces, do you foresee the Armed Forces becoming a heavier burden on the nation's budget?

[Discua] Definitely not. The future of the institution, as I told you earlier, will depend on planning for the year 2000. The goal is to give Honduras an Armed Forces in step with the nation's true situation and budget.

[Melgar] What will the future of the Armed Forces be?

[Discua] The Armed Forces must fulfill a number of essential duties that include supporting the country's ecological programs, which the Army, with the support of the Air Force and Navy, is already doing; effectively controlling drug trafficking, which it is already doing; controlling and suppressing terrorism, which is no longer ideological in nature but a form of violence stemming from unemployment, hunger, and drug trafficking; and controlling the trafficking of weapons and explosives. The Armed Forces will comply with all obligations mandated by the Constitution. [passage omitted]

[Ridel] Are there persons whose views or positions could give rise to speculation that there are certain internal movements among Armed Forces officers who want you to retire or leave the post of Armed Forces chief? More than one officer has stated that he disagrees with your extended tenure and other things related to DIN's separation from the Armed Forces.

[Discua] The Honduran Armed Forces must begin a process of modernization, reorganization, and internal adjustment. It is required because the area's geopolitical profile has totally changed. The immediate dangers have not disappeared; they are still present. The Armed Forces' structures must change.

[Melgar] That is the explanation given to the public. Is it the same explanation given to certain discontented officers?

[Discua] No officers have said they are discontented. I want to stress that at the meeting we normally have with Cosuffaa at the command level, that is, joint chiefs of staff and unit commanders—normally four unit commanders attend each month—no one has ever spoken out against what we are doing because Cosuffaa issued a ruling at the time confirming that any decisions made were correct provided they obeyed the law.

[Ridel] [Brigadier] Gen. Lazaro Avila Soleno [defense and public security minister] spoke out against Cosuffaa being in charge of the Armed Forces.

[Discua] Perhaps at that time he was one of the persons who wanted the post. After Cosuffaa recommended that my tenure be extended, he clearly followed instructions from the Cosuffaa mandate. [passage omitted]

Nicaragua

Ex-Rebel Commanders Reunifying RN for Government Talks

PA1604180093 Managua Radio Catolica in Spanish 1100 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Excerpts] Former rebel commanders have announced they began to reunify the Nicaraguan Resistance [RN] so that the former contra movement can talk to the government with a single voice. Leaders Maximino Rodriguez, Commander Wilmer, who is the coordinator; Tomas Davis Hernandez; Julio Cesar Blandon, Caliman; [name indistinct] Zeledon, Commander Chispero; Enrique Quinones, Commander Josue; Jaime Zeledon, Commander Bolivar; Eliecer Rivera, Commander Colombiano; Jorge Eduardo Gallo, Commander Wilfredo; Premio Altamirano, and Commander Yimireo, held a news conference. Let us listen to them:

[Begin recording] [unidentified RN leader] The RN is a movement that was created with just that name. If at one point it did have other names, it was because of war strategy, when parts were known as the Northern Front, the Southern Front, Yatama Front, and Central Front. RN unification is being carried out only under this name, although this group includes members of the Nicaraguan Resistance Party, which is asking to be granted legal status; the RN Civic Association [Asociacion Civica]; and the Association of RN War Handicapped, which has over 50,000 members.

We are here without any other name. We are here as RN, as Nicaraguans, as nationalists, without any other name.

[First unidentified reporter] I would like to ask Commander Wilmer, as the general coordinator, what is the National (?Provisional) Commission doing to clarify the murders of RN members?

[Rodriguez] As members of the national commission named on 4 April 1993, our duty is not just to try to convince this government to seek the right methods to clarify the murders of RN members carried out by the

FSLN [Sandinist National Liberation Front] but also to seek unity. We want the clarification of all those murders. For that reason, we are trying to speak with a single voice so the government cannot manipulate this matter and hide the crimes that have gone unpunished in rural areas. In the days to come, we will engage in the specific work of trying to seek the support of more RN members. We are also going to seek documents of inquiries conducted regarding human rights violations, to go simply as RN, with no other name, to demand that the government and human rights groups like America's Watch and others clarify those murders. [passage omitted] [Reporter] Reading your agenda on unification, I notice there are many points of concurrence with the agenda proposed by the armed groups, specifically the 3-80 Northern Front. What is your view on these armed groups? My other question is when you talk of mutual respect, does that mean you are ready or are you rejecting the armed struggle?

[Rodriguez] The armed groups have their reasons for rearming. As RN members, we have chosen not to rearm because we have been passive to some extent. We do not know their basic objectives, but we think they have their reasons. In the wake of the disbandment of the RN in 1990, we believed we had to allow room for democracy and peace in the country. The FSLN has driven our members to violence with its military apparatus, which is still in the fields and cities, while President Violeta Chamorro looks the other way. [end recording]

Gen. Ortega Remarks on Army's Economic Role

PA1604140893 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 15 Apr 93 p 5

["Excerpt" of an interview with Sandinist People's Army Chief General Humberto Ortega by Yasmin Ross in Managua, date not given; published in the "latest edition" of PENSAMIENTO PROPIO magazine under the headline: "The General and the Businessmen: the Armed Forces Chief Wants To Fight on the Free Market"]

[Text] [Ross] In what spirit is the Army making its economic incursions?

[Ortega] The state provides us with a subsistence budget that cannot meet the demands of the next few years. Therefore, we are promoting a pro-business policy to attain complementary resources that will allow us to better defend the troops and officers' real salaries and to bolster our social security.

[Ross] How aggressive can the Army be with the restrictions imposed on the free market? Is it interested in owning shares in banks and companies or in participating in the privatization of state institutions?

[Ortega] We will see how things work out as opportunities emerge. We believe that without disregarding its nature as the guarantor of the defense of sovereignty and internal order in this country, the Army must adapt to free market economy rules, which are part of the business philosophy.

[Ross] Without restrictions?

[Ortega] Military companies, which are autonomous, will operate like any other civilian investments. It is not the Army but its companies that will acquire shares. These companies operate like stock companies. The fact that they belong to the Army will not give them any privileges or advantages. They will function like any other private company or foreign investment in Nicaragua.

To this end, they will be able to form associations or refrain from doing so, merge capital, and so forth; in short, there are many variables in capitalism, are there not?

[Ross] Does this not feed civilian society's fears that the Armed Forces will become an excessively powerful economic force?

[Ortega] I do not believe so because our goal is to complement the state budget.

[Ross] But perhaps the same dynamic of multiplying capital will allow the Army to accumulate considerable power.

[Ortega] I wish that were so but the most difficult task right now is to make money because our companies are small. The purpose of doing this is not to take the place of the economy's foremost traditional and new representatives, nor does that seem feasible.

[Ross] In what economic activities are you engaged?

[Ortega] The Armed Forces are participating in different social and ecological programs to support the central government and a number of ministries. During vaccination campaigns we take medicine to remote areas; we patrol forests, transport international missions, and preserve the fauna. We have a turtle preservation program in La Flor.

The private sector contracts Air Force helicopters legally to haul lumber, conduct feasibility studies, and so forth. Our profits, which fluctuate, are used to maintain our equipment and complement the budget, which is insufficient.

[Ross] What will be done with the $24 million obtained from the sale of helicopters to Peru and artillery to Ecuador?

[Ortega] Most of those resources are already allocated. Some will be used to capitalize the pension fund and the Military Social Security Institute. New helicopters must be purchased because the ones we have are old; almost all of them have been shot, they have finite life spans and Russia is unable to adequately supply replacement parts. There is disorder in Russia, even anarchy. We do not

even know with whom to deal. We have no clear counterparts because everyone there now wants to charge us for everything as if they were the greatest capitalists in the world. We want to replace the old helicopters with Western helicopters, which are more versatile and use less fuel. We are negotiating with several European countries and Canadian and U.S. firms and we will need fresh money to amortize the first payments.

[Ross] How many bank accounts does the Army have abroad?

[Ortega] I do not have that information; as many as it needs to function. The Army has less than $6 million in foreign currency. That is an insignificant amount for any Army in the world. The money quickly turns into vehicles, replacement parts, hospital materials, fuel, boats, and communications equipment. We are usually in debt. We have many expenses.

[Ross] Why are businessmen and investors seeking guidance from Humberto Ortega?

[Ortega] Many foreign businessmen and investors unquestionably seek me out to inquire what the Army thinks or what I think about the security of foreign private capital. They want to know if order will prevail so that capital will not be threatened. They want to know about the image abroad of a Nicaragua with gangs and chaos, whether this image is accurate, if this chaos will be brought under control or if confiscations will occur again. I explain to them that even if the Sandinists regained power, the type of measures implemented in the past could not be enforced now. Private capital would be safe, especially foreign capital. The Sandinist National Liberation Front could no longer touch that capital if it was earned honestly and if it is functioning.

[Ross] Are you conducting investments on your own initiative outside the Army as an institution?

[Ortega] I do not have the time or resources to do that. To be a businessman, you must devote yourself 100 percent to business or you will lose everything. In due time I would like to devote myself to business but at present the only business I promote is institutional. Through it I am making a number of friends, people who feel safe working with companies with ties to the Army because they see in us more seriousness, organization, planning, discipline and greater control in our business leadership; they appreciate a soldier's habits and reflexes. That is why it is said that humanity's greatest businessmen emerged from military headquarters.

[Ross] Regarding these consultations by businessmen, don't they involve you somehow in their businesses?

[Ortega] Dealers and businessmen are the most fluent and attentive speakers but the most difficult when it comes to revealing any information. They do not give even the time of day.

[Ross] What do you gain, then?

[Ortega] What I gain in this is simply the generation of jobs in Nicaragua and stability. I convey enthusiasm to many businessmen. I make them feel confident so they will invest in Nicaragua. I give them a political viewpoint, I give them calm, and I discuss our negative image abroad. Then I send them to the central government, where they decide whether or not to invest. Each investor generates jobs through which we can combat poverty. I am pleased about this. To date I have not associated with any investor in Nicaragua, not because it would be sinful or wrong but simply because I do not believe it is necessary and I have not had the opportunity to do so. As long as I am at the head of the Army, such activities could encourage lies.

[Ross] You just said you have no investments in Nicaragua.

[Ortega] Not here nor abroad.

[Ross] It is said you have real estate and a few fast food establishments in Costa Rica.

[Ortega] That is totally false.

Major Gen. Cuadra Comments on H. Ortega's Term

PA1604142093 Managua Radio Nicaragua Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 14 Apr 93

[Text] Major General Joaquin Cuadra Lacayo on 13 April stated President Violeta Chamorro is empowered to remove Army Gen. Humberto Ortega whenever she deems advisable. He said the president of the Republic already decided Gen. Humberto Ortega will leave his post as Army leader before she leaves the Presidency.

Cuadra reported changes to the Army basic law will be presented to the Presidency in the next weeks. The most important aspect of it is not when Gen. Ortega will leave but the institutionalization of the Army, he added.

[Begin recording] [Cuadra] Discussion of the basic law has advanced significantly. The final touches are being made. It will be presented to the Presidency next week and a legal analysis will ensue. The president will determine its fate.

[Unidentified reporter] How long is the period of [words indistinct] the staff?

[Cuadra] That is among the issues that has not yet been defined. In principle, however, it is believed the Army leader should be in office for five years. [end recording]

Army Maj. Gen. Joaquin Cuadra said although the period established by law is five years and that the president of the Republic decided the Army general will leave before the president, Gen. Humberto Ortega will leave [incomplete sentence as heard]

[Begin recording] [Cuadra] There are two important things. There is an attempt to redesign the law to establish a new military career. The law states clearly that the institutional needs regarding the term of the

Army commander in chief should be five years. As for Gen. Ortega, the president of the Republic decided he will leave before the president. That will be so.

[Reporter] [words indistinct] Cardinal Obando y Bravo said Gen. Ortega will leave in (?late) November 1995?

[Cuadra] I do not know why Cardinal Obando y Bravo said that....

[Reporter, interrupting] What was discussed during Minister Lacayo's visit to [words indistinct]?

[Cuadra] We discussed exchanges between the two countries. Lacayo explained how Nicaragua has progressed in strengthening democratic structures. Lacayo discussed the serious efforts the Army has made to make the Armed Forces professional. Projects at the institutional level to strengthen and modernize the Army were also discussed. In sum, various topics regarding the bilateral relations of the two countries were discussed. [end recording]

Regarding the Army law, Maj. Gen. Cuadra said it will be presented to the president in the next few weeks. He said its most important aspect is not when Gen. Ortega will step down, but the new dimension of the Army and its institutional life.

[Begin Cuadra recording] We will complete our lengthy and very delicate work in the next few weeks. The law does not only pertain to issues that are the focus of people's attention, such as the permanence of the Army commander in chief. This is not the most important issue of our serious work of drafting a law that seeks basically to redesign the military career of the new Army; it is about the dimension of the Army.

It includes a number of aspects pertaining to institutional life that are very important and they make up the most important part of this law; it does not contain only the issues that have been the focus of the people's attention. Segments of the population motivated by political interests only want to know when Gen. Ortega will leave. For us, that is not the most important aspect of this law. The law contains a number of very broad regulations. We have worked on it for months, toured various countries, studied the experiences of Latin American and European countries, and received advice. This is an important development that will establish a new phase in the institutional life of the Armed Forces. This is the most important aspect of this law. [end recording]

Citizens Sentenced for Forged Documents, Passports Case

PA1804030593 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 16 Apr 93 p 2

[Text] Fifth Criminal Court Judge Diana Avendano sentenced to prison the Nicaraguan citizens who forged official documents and applied for passports using the names of the Jafry-Safary family. These passports were found in the hands of one of the individuals involved in the attack on the World Trade Center in New York City.

Judge Avendano sentenced Rodolfo Lacayo Barreto, Alejandro Velasquez Ramos, and Benjamin Zeledon Picado. Police investigations show they forged birth certificates and applied for passports in July 1992 in the names of a family supposedly called Jafry-Safary.

Lacayo Barreto was given a three-year prison term for forging official certificates and three years for working as a professional without a proper title, court secretary Nelson Rodriguez stated.

Velasquez Ramos and Zeledon Picado were sentenced to three years in prison for forging official documents.

Filomena Carcache and Javier Abraham Sanchez Martinez were given two years in prison for document forgery. Attorney Orion Zambrana was sentenced to one year in prison for the same charge. Police seized from Sanchez Martinez a small laboratory that included a laminating machine, a glue gun, and other tools of the trade.

An additional 22 arrested persons are still awaiting sentencing. The charges against them include document forgery, violation of immigration laws, and false identity.

Police sources have revealed that the investigation continues, and other members of this network are expected to appear in court in the next few days.

Panama

Bomb Explodes Near Health Ministry 16 Apr

PA1704022293 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0153 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] Panama City, 16 Apr (ACAN-EFE)—An explosion of unknown origin was reported on the evening of 16 April in downtown Panama City. Volunteer firemen said it is not yet known if there were any victims.

A spokesman for the "La Exposicion" fire station told ACAN-EFE that the explosion took place at approximately 2045 [0145 GMT] near the Finance Ministry. So far its causes are unknown and units have been sent to the site to confirm the damage.

Health Minister Guillermo Rolla Pimentel gave assurances that the explosion was a homemade device that used gunpowder and caused unspecified property damage.

Rolla accused "terrorist groups and Noriega followers" of being responsible for the attack to the Health Ministry [adjacent to the Finance Ministry].

The official said that "he will not be intimidated" and this act will ensure the rejection of an amnesty law for civilian and military officials of the previous regime

arrested on 20 December 1989, when the United States invaded Panama and overthrew Noriega.

"They better forget the amnesty;" this terrorist act is "unheard of in a democracy," added the health minister who was visibly annoyed.

The amnesty draft law presented by the opposition Democratic Revolutionary Party, the political wing of the previous military regime, is bogged down at the Legislative Assembly and has been the cause of clashes between those who favor an amnesty and its detractors. On 15 April these clashes claimed the first death—a 52-year-old woman who died of a stroke.

Immigration Director Comments

PA1704025293 Panama City Radio KW Continente in Spanish 0215 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Report by Jose Felix Barrera]

[Text] It has been confirmed that the explosion reported on 16 April at the Health Ministry in Panama City originated on the ground floor near the bathrooms. Immigration Director Antonio Dominguez is here with us. He was not allowed to enter the building because firemen and police explosives experts are searching the building.

[Begin recording] [Dominguez] I did not see anything. The entire building was closed up.

[Unidentified reporter] What do you think of this attack?

[Dominguez] Express your own opinions.

[Second unidentified reporter] Why are you armed, Mr. Dominguez?

[Dominguez] Do you think I am going to go about with empty hands? What is wrong with you?

[Third unidentified reporter] [question indistinct]

[Dominguez] I have no bodyguards. I am alone.

[Fourth unidentified reporter] Health Minister Rolla Pimentel has been one of the severest critics of the amnesty law.

[Dominguez] That is your opinion. I believe everyone is entitled to an opinion and we must respect other people's views. I believe, and I have said it a thousand times, that it is time for us to unite the family instead of breaking it up.

[Fifth unidentified reporter] (?Do you believe) this has anything to do with his views?

[Dominguez] From what I can see it is an attack that did not seek to do any damage because it was placed in a deserted ground floor bathroom and it has done no damage. It must have been done by someone from the ministry; who else could have placed the bomb? All the doors are closed.

[Sixth unidentified reporter] [question indistinct]

[Dominguez] No. This is the work of a frustrated or bitter person who wants to be heard.

[Seventh unidentified reporter] Could this be viewed as a warning?

[Dominguez] All acts of violence are warnings, be they justified or not, and they should be considered. [end recording]

This is the situation at the Health Ministry, where an explosion took place near the bathrooms. The area is being cordoned off for an investigation. No one has been harmed.

Arnulfist Party Rejects Proposed Amnesty Bill

PA1604181393 Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish 16 Apr 93 p 8

["Arnulfist Party statement" issued by Party President Mireya Moscoso de Gruber on behalf of the party National Directorate in Panama City on 13 April]

[Text] The granting of a parliamentary pardon or amnesty historically has been a political act to seek national harmony, brotherhood, and reconciliation as a means to promote a constructive effort to achieve work, unity, and the consolidation of families.

The amnesty pardons and absolves political crimes committed by those who sought to remove illegally the governments in power. With their conspiratorial behavior, they promoted acts that resulted in harm, damage, offense, and death.

Each case of amnesty, therefore, calls for an individual study to be made. This is required to put a stop to those who, sheltered by impunity, force, arrogance, and a distorted abuse of power, have misused public funds, assassinated, tortured, and unrepentantly and mercilessly attacked the Panamanian people, who clamor for justice today.

The Arnulfist Party, which was the one that sustained the most dead, injured, and offended by the dictatorship, rejects the attempt to grant political amnesty to common criminals. It demands, on the contrary, that their trials be expedited and the maximum penalty established by law be applied to them.

To substantiate its objection to the law, which seeks to liberate torturers, killers, thieves, and civil rights violators, the Arnulfist Party asks its supporters and members to attend the acts to repudiate the proposed amnesty for common criminals. [Issued] Panama City, 13 April 1993
[Signed] Mireya Moscoso de Gruber
for the National Directorate

Judge Orders Immediate Release of Eduardo Herrera, Others

PA1604035393 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Text] The 7th Circuit Court judge has repealed the preventive arrest order issued against Eduardo Herrera, Ricardo Antonio Urena, Isaac Bedoya Castaneda, Adolfo Castillo, Cesar Luciano Bordero Menoti, Jose Maria Huertas Guillen, and Carlos Ivan Moreno and has ordered their immediate release. They must appear in her office within the first five days of each month and are banned from leaving the country without judicial authorization.

The ruling handed down by Judge Nilsa Chung de Gonzalez is based on the behavior demonstrated by the indicted men during and after the act and on the punishment they would receive if they were found guilty of seditious activity against the state. [sentence as heard]

Lawyer Says Executive Branch 'Meddling' in Herrera Case

PA1604233193 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 16 Apr 93 p 1A

[Text] Seventh District Judge Nilsa Chung de Gonzalez has started legal proceedings for sedition against Colonel Eduardo Herrera and 17 other military men for participating in the 4 and 5 December 1990 rebellion, but at the same time she ordered the preventive release of the former National Police chief.

The ruling was announced on the afternoon of 15 April through a decree issued by the Supreme Court of Justice.

Hector Zavala, Col. Herrera's lawyer, said that he, his client, and his client's relatives are suprised that the ruling was announced inasmuch as the prosecutor of the Ninth District had presented—by order of the Attorney General's Office—an appeal against the release order.

Attorney General Jorge Ramon Valdes asked all of his prosecutors to present all sorts of delay measures to prevent the release of Eduardo Herrera.

According to Zavala, who hosted a news conference on the evening of 15 April, the Executive Branch has decided that Eduardo Herrera must remain in prison until after the 1994 elections to prevent him from participating in any way in the forthcoming political campaign.

"Col. Eduardo Herrera will remain in prison," the lawyer said, adding that President Guillermo Endara himself warned those demanding amnesty that anyone could be released, except for that military officer.

Herrera will remain under arrest inasmuch as he faces other charges for evasion, terrorism in Chiriqui, and planning "Operation Little Fat Man" that allegedly sought to murder President Guillermo Endara.

A "national campaign" will get under way the week of 18 April to charge that the Executive Branch is meddling in the cases against Herrera and to promote Herrera's release, Zavala said.

In addition to Herrera, the judge started legal proceedings against Tomas Herron, Luis Donadio, Jose Maria Huertas, Isaac Bedoya, Fidel Oro, Tomas Valdes, Samuel Bery Teng, Carlos Cerezo, Tomas Herrera, Eladio Romero, Dario Cabezas, Mario Ramos Ocana, Carlos Ivan Moreno, Lucas Gonzalez, Jorge Bernal, Carlos Rumbo, and Ricardo Herrera.

During this process, ordered released from custody were Eduardo Herrera, Ricardo Herrera, Isaac Bedoya, Adolfo Castillo, Jose Maria Huertas, and Carlos Ivan Moreno.

The 7th District Court also ordered the arrest of Dario Cabezas del Cid, Mario Ramos Ocana, Olmedo Riggs, and Jorge Bernal, who remain under asylum in Central American countries.

The court also decided to provisionally dismiss Erasmo Reyes, Narcy Carrera, Alcibiades Rodriguez, Armando Rodriguez, Orlando Mocci, Carlos Valdes, Irving Vega, Julio Vallejos, Zoroel Diaz, Urias Grau, Vicente Peralta, Mariano De Jesus Pujol, Reynaldo H. Cedeno, Jose A. Nunez, and Cesar Cordero.

Herrera's lawyer—Hector Zavala—said that Endara, Vice President Guillermo Ford, and Dr. Ricardo Arias Calderon are among the persons who will be called as witnesses in the hearing against his client.

The lawyer also described as "irresponsible" the statements made on 15 April by Minister Juan Chevalier when he said that the judge who ordered the arrest is a Noriega follower, yet he does not know that the case has been stopped due to the actions by the Attorney General's Office.

Assembly To Present Report on ARI Board of Directors Members

PA1604133793 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 15 Apr 93 p 8A

[Report by Jose Quintero de Leon]

[Text] The Legislative Assembly Credentials Commission has announced that in a week at the latest it will present to the assembly plenum a report on the members of the Interoceanic Region Authority's [ARI] Board of Directors designated by President Guillermo Endara.

The 14 April session, presided over by Liberal Party member Arnulfo Escalona, lasted three hours and was marked by the tension provoked by the objections presented against directors Mario Mena, Carlos Mendoza, and Jose Chong Hon.

The only appointment not questioned was that of Colon architect Jorge Rodriguez Moreno, whose background was preliminarily approved by the commissioners.

The objections against Mena, a labor union leader, were presented by Baltazar Aizpurua, secretary general of the Union of Panamanian Journalists, who argued that Mena is a well-known active member of the Christian Democratic Party [PDC].

Aizpurua also presented an objection against Mendoza for his actions in detriment of the journalists of the former Editora Renovacion, S.A., who have not yet collected the amounts due them for having lost their jobs.

Mena was objected to by the Confederation of Workers of the Republic of Panama [CTRP] and the National Federation of Associations of Public Employees, which say Mena does not represent the labor sector.

The commission dismissed these objections because neither journalist Aizpurua nor Armando Zapata, acting CTRP secretary general, showed up to support their objections at the commission.

Chong Hon faced accountants Javier Romero and Armando Bey, who said Chong Hon was not fit for the position of ARI director because his activities as a professional had not been correct.

Romero and Bey presented documents and evidence against Chong Hon, a Peat, Marwick and Mitchell shareholder and employee. Allowed to defend himself, he succeeded in refuting the charges.

According to Escalona, the commission is in the stage of checking the ability and moral uprightness required for the directors' ratification. Those who did show up succeeded in proving they are Panamanians, are over 30 years old, and have a clean police record.

Other requirements deal with their not being salaried public officials and that they are not related to one another, or to the president of the Republic.

Both Mendoza and Mena said they will defend their freedom to join whatever association and party they choose—they belong to the Liberal and PDC parties—because this is a right and a freedom inherent to every human being.

Mendoza and Mena said the law that created ARI does not stipulate that directors are forbidden from joining political parties. Chong Hon vigorously condemned those who attack his appointment only because he is of Chinese ancestry.

Police Officer Accuses Police Academy Director of Drug Trafficking

PA1604140393 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 15 Apr 93 p 1a

[Article by Ibeth Vega G. and Javier Gabarrete]

[Text] Sebastian Castillo, a National Police officer, who was arrested on the first day of the "Bocas del Toro Without Drugs" operation, has accused Rodrigo Colon Sanchez, director of the Police Academy (Acapol), of drug trafficking, an Attorney General's Office source has disclosed.

According to the source—who preferred to remain anonymous—Castillo pleaded guilty during the inquiry at the Bocas del Toro prosecutor's office. At the same time, Castillo accused Colon Sanchez of being part of the gang that has allegedly participated in drug trafficking since Colon Sanchez was a National Police major in Bocas del Toro.

According to the source, Colon Sanchez—who became Acapol director after the death of Cadet Anel Aparicio at the academy's installations from excessive exercise—"used to accept bribes" to allow drugs to transit Bocas del Toro without any problem when he was a major in Bocas del Toro.

"Castillo accused Colon Sanchez of accepting bribes," the source said.

The source added that in addition to the Police Academy director, the following were also accused of participating in this crime: Belarmino Chavez, regional Custom's director; three Custom's agents, and a considerable number of citizens from Bocas del Toro, among them one named Ochy.

The source said that most probably the police major, as well as the regional Custom's director, will be called for questioning in the next few days. Nevertheless, the source said that the situation is difficult because the accusations are not accompanied by evidence.

According to the source, the 12 persons arrested on 12 April were questioned and several were already released due to lack of evidence.

The second day of the operation in Bocas del Toro was unproductive, as the media alerted the drug traffickers. Nevertheless, some arrests were made, but this time the authorities decided to keep a tight lid on the matter.

Another Attorney General's Office source said that during the "Chiriqui Without Drugs" operation, at least 40 persons were arrested, among them a sizable number of Judicial Technical Police members.

Regarding the operation, the source said that in the Pueblo Nuevo area in Puerto Armuelles [Chiriqui], 228 bundles of what is assumed is "crack," as well as cash were found at the home of Enrique Lopez.

Major Ricardo Guardia Figueroa pointed out that the operation has been successful in Chiriqui Province, adding: "the operation is not over, this will continue."

Alberto Henriquez, spokesman of the General Customs Directorate, assured that the "Bocas del Toro Without Drugs" operation has not implicated any of that institution's officials.

Henriquez explained in a communique that Roberto Lee, whom is mentioned by local media as one of those involved in the operation, has not been working in the institution since 13 February 1991.

Besides, Henriquez said, "Belarmino Chavez, who is regional Customs administrator, has been doing an extraordinary job repressing drug trafficking in that province."

Police Director Not To Dismiss Major

PA1604140693 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 14 Apr 93

[Report by Ciro Ortega]

[Text] National Police Director Oswaldo Fernandez stated on 14 April he will not dismiss Major Rodrigo Colon Sanchez from his post due to reports about his alleged participation in drug-trafficking activities.

[Begin recording] [Fernandez] We have yet to receive a dismissal order or arrest warrant in connection with this case.

[Ortega] Will you dismiss him in your role as his superior?

[Fernandez] No, definitely not.

[President Guillermo Endara] He must be investigated and, if he is found guilty, the law must prevail. [end recording]

Reliable sources have reported Maj. Rodrigo Colon Sanchez will be investigated.

[Begin recording] [Fernandez] The fact a person accuses another person of an illegal action does not mean we will immediately seek him out, condemn him, and punish him. We must wait for the results of an investigation.

[Ortega] Are there any other Public Force members involved in these actions?

[Fernandez] Look, until now only a second lieutenant has confessed. He has mentioned, I repeat, he has mentioned—meaning he has not presented evidence—Maj. Colon Sanchez, who was chief of the Bocas del Toro police almost two years ago, right? No other National Police member is involved. I want to emphasize that the investigation is being carried out by the Police Investigation Department and the Attorney General's Office. [end recording]

Colombian Drug Struggles Said Increasing Presence of Traffickers

PA1704182793 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1631 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Panama City, 16 Apr (ACAN-EFE)—Colombia's struggle against the drug cartels has increased the presence of narcotics traffickers in Panama, where the police authorities admit they lack a national strategy to fight them.

Idelfonso Suira, chief of Judicial Technical Police (PTJ) Criminal Investigations, told ACAN-EFE that "the actions by the Colombian Government to suppress crime directly affects Panama because the criminals eagerly want to cross the border to seek refuge."

Ramiro Jarvis, in charge of the Drug Office of the PTJ, said that "the harsh struggle Colombia has waged against the drug lords in recent months forced these criminals to seek alternate places for drug trafficking operations and to obtain personal protection."

Jarvis told ACAN-EFE that there are "serious indications" that persons who are "very influential" in drug trafficking circles are on Panamanian soil. Although he refused to give names, the drug official added that "members of the Cali and Medellin drug cartels are active in Panama."

Inspector Suira reported that three months ago Panamanian intelligence organizations redoubled their security measures along the border with Colombia after receiving anonymous reports on the possible presence of Pablo Escobar.

Although he insisted that, according to the information he has, the Colombian drug lord is not on Panamanian territory, Suira did not rule out the fact that on other occasions he evaded security checks at the border.

To this effect, Jarvis admitted that Panama "lacks a strategy to fight this scourge, a stipulation of the functions of the organizations entrusted with applying the laws, and training for the personnel that fight narcotics trafficking."

He flatly denied there are cases of corruption among the staff of the Office of the Attorney General, although he admitted there are problems resulting from the low salaries of the staff members.

Throughout the week of 11 April, several police officers have been arrested and others are being investigated in Bocas del Toro and Chiriqui Provinces (bordering with Costa Rica) for their alleged connections with a drug-trafficking network.

According to state security organizations and the General Customs Directorate, over 18 tons of pure cocaine have been seized in Panama since 1990.

The police authorities also agreed that "there is not a national awareness on the true implications of the

scourge, nor are there any government programs to suppress and prevent drug consumption."

Inspector Idelfonso Siura warned that the increase in weapons trafficking is another situation derived from the growing influence of narcotics trafficking in the country, because "as they disband, the international drug organizations require personal arsenals for their security and that of their merchandise."

The PTJ Criminal Investigations chief emphasized that there are various indications connections are made in Panama between weapons traffickers, generated in the countries where there were wars in the past decade (Nicaragua or El Salvador), and the Colombian drug cartels.

Nonetheless, Suira said that in Panama "an undetermined amount of weapons was left in the hands of local common criminals who took advantage of the situation of anarchy that prevailed in the country during the U.S. military incursion."

He underscored that in recent raids in the homes of alleged traffickers, the police have seized RPG weapons, AK-47 rifles, large amounts of ammunition for these weapons, fragmentation grenades, antitank weapons, as well as explosive material.

According to police estimates, some 22,000 Panamanians possess firearms legally and approximately 3,000 persons carry weapons illegally. These weapons can easily be purchased on the black market.

Four AK 47 Assault Rifles Destined for Colombia Seized

PA1704182093 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Judicial Technical Police [PTJ] delivered another blow to organized crime with the seizure of four Soviet-made AK 47 assault rifles. The weapons, headed for Colombia, were seized at the Public Market.

[Begin recording, Arnoldo Munoz, PTJ Organized Crime section member] PTJ Organized Crime Office units carried out the seizure of the four Soviet-made AK 47 assault rifles. The weapons were seized at the Public Market. One Panamanian and one Cuban were arrested. The former is named Marcos Antonio Gonzalez and the Cuban's name is Juan Antonio Friol Caballero, who carries migration permit number 0030. Based on investigations carried out by Organized Crime Office personnel, we have learned that the weapons had been sold in exchange for drugs. Their final destination was Colombia. [end recording]

With this and other similar operations, the PTJ is seeking to stop the activities of organized groups that are involved in trafficking weapons and drugs and that are using our country as a transit point to perpetrate their crimes.

Argentina

U.S., EEC, Japanese Protectionist Measures Criticized

PY1604135593 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1202 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Text] Buenos Aires, 15 Apr (NA)—Felipe Sola, the Agriculture, Livestock, and Fishing secretary, has questioned U.S., Japanese, and EEC protectionist agricultural policies. He reported that over the past two decades Argentina has lost $43 billion in agricultural and livestock exports.

Sola said: "Since 1970, when our net exports were worth 2.1 percent of overall world agricultural trade, our exports have fallen to just 1.7 percent." He added: "This situation has so far resulted in a loss of incoming currency to the country amounting to $43 billion."

Sola made these remarks during a speech to the Ninth World Meat Congress in Sidney, Australia, the content of which was learned yesterday here through a press communique from the Agriculture Secretariat.

Referring to the world agricultural crisis, Sola said: "It is the logical answer to the irrational policies of men, particularly those followed by some national and regional political institutions such as the EEC, the United States, and Japan which implement protectionism and distortion in agricultural markets."

Sola also said that if an agreement is not reached this year within the Uruguay Round of GATT, "the only alternative will be an aggravation of the crisis with no markets to commercially sell our agricultural and livestock products, and leading most of the world population to the depths of poverty and unemployment."

Di Tella Comments on Depredation by Foreign Ships

PY1604154393 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2145 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Text] Buenos Aires, 15 Apr (NA)—Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella today expressed the Argentine Government's concern over the depredation by foreign fleets on the fishing wealth outside the 200-mile Argentine Exclusive Economic Zone (ZEE).

The minister said that during his 14 April flight over the South Atlantic he observed 87 foreign vessels operating outside the ZEE limit, between 44 and 47 degrees latitude South and 61 and 59 degrees longitude West. The topic was outlined today by the minister during the cabinet meeting that was held in San Luis. He reaffirmed the need to demand, before international forums, Argentina's right to some type of control over the migratory species outside the 200 miles that are considered to belong to Argentina.

During a news conference this afternoon in the military sector of the metropolitan airport just before departing for Montevideo where he will meet his Uruguayan colleague Sergio Abreu, Di Tella outlined the government's strategy in the face of the foreign fleets.

The fishing vessels operate in an area 30 miles wide by 100 miles long off the coasts of Chubut and Santa Cruz which is an area that is not encompassed in either Argentine waters or in the zone drawn by the British around the Malvinas Islands.

This uncontrolled corridor is where 450,000 tonnes of fish a year are captured according to estimates made by the foreign minister, who added that this is higher than all the fishing around the Malvinas and in the zone of the continent.

Minister Di Tella said: "The fishing problem between the Malvinas Islands and the continent is less important in the face of the problem of extra-jurisdictional fishing."

In view of this situation the government proposes, as a first measure, the strengthening of its control over the migratory species captured beyond the 200-mile zone and, second, to open the ports of the Patagonia to allow the foreign fishing vessels to get supplies.

Minister Di Tella explained that this initiative would also allow the reactivation of the Argentine ports in the south which would create employment and commerce and would facilitate "some control" over the fishing of foreign vessels.

Minister Di Tella said: "The idea is to get the foreign vessels into our ports. The fleets would provide information and accept some kind of voluntary control over fishing activities."

Minister Di Tella and Navy personnel flew over the Argentine ZEE in an area off the Trelew coast.

The purpose of the flight was to verify the control operations over the fishing activities in the ZEE and to check for violations, especially by foreign fishing vessels.

Supreme Court Defines 200-mile Limit in San Jorge Gulf

PY1604145993 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2157 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Excerpt] Buenos Aires, 15 Apr (NA)—The Supreme Court established today the way to define the 200-mile limit in the San Jorge Gulf zone in relation to a case involving a Korean fishing ship caught in Argentine territorial waters and from which a large amount of squid was confiscated.

The Supreme Court said that the Argentine waters in that zone must be measured from Rasa Island, which is across the Gulf, because despite being an island it fulfills the requirement of having the "lowest tides" in accordance with the regulation established by Law 17,094.

The Coast Guard confiscated the cargo and fined the owners of the Cheog Yang 501 fishing ship on the basis

that the 200-mile limit must be calculated from the Rasa Island across the mouth of the Gulf that covers part of the Chubut and Santa Cruz Provinces.

Judge Osvaldo Cesar Gugliemino of the Fourth Federal Court reversed this decision because he believes the ship was outside the 200-mile limit "calculated from an imaginary straight line that links the capes that form the mouth of the San Jorge Gulf and not from the Rasa Island." [passage omitted]

Defense Minister Denies Armed Forces 'Defenseless'

PY1704002693 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2110 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Text] Buenos Aires, 15 Apr (TELAM)—Defense Minister Oscar Camilion "categorically" denied today that the Armed Forces are "defenseless" because of budget problems. Although he admitted the current situation is not the best, he denied that there is unrest in military circles over the salary issue.

Camilion, who took over the ministry 10 days ago, said today that "there were no proposals" from the Armed Forces concerning salary policy for the military, despite the fact that the salary is "the lowest in history."

Camilion told the press that his administration is concentrating its "efforts in military reorganization" to put the Armed Forces in tune with "the new international situation and the economy of the country."

In answer to a question he said that the Armed Forces reorganization process is a process taking place all over the world, and consists in "reductions in size and personnel, and adjustment to technological needs which are changing very quickly."

The reorganization issue will also be the main topic of discussion during meetings which start next week at the headquarters of the three branches of the Armed Forces.

Camilion and his aides will attend a lecture at Air Force headquarters on 20 April, another lecture at Navy headquarters the following day, and another at Army headquarters on 23 April. The last one will be held at the Joint Chiefs of Staff on 27 April.

Camilion also reiterated that the Condor-2 project "has been dismantled" and that the national government has decided "to suspend the production of any weapon that may have implications in the area, let us say, of mass destruction."

He emphasized that Argentina "will not enter an area which we consider prohibited in the new international order, which is in process of reconfiguration." He added: "This type of weapon goes beyond the limits."

Camilion also confirmed that Argentina will continue participating in peace missions. He added: "In the upcoming new phase of international relations after the cold war, the United Nations has a role to fulfill."

Camilion believes that UN peace missions "will carry out classical peacekeeping operations to an increasing degree" and that peace "will be enforced in a process of all kinds of aid," in which process "we will participate in any way we can."

In answer to a question, Camilion admitted that the Armed Forces "from the point of view of their defense capabalities, are not in their best condition." He also said there are "limited" possibilities for a salary increase for the military sector in the near future.

Defense Minister Hospitalized for Tachycardia, Gout

PY1604221893 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1812 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Buenos Aires, 126 Apr (TELAM)—Defense Minister Oscar Camilion was recovering today from tachycardia and gout, after having been hospitalized in this capital last night.

Camilion, 63 years of age, attended a cabinet meeting in San Luis yesterday. His aides said that Camilion felt ill after the meeting.

Upon returning to the federal capital from San Luis, Camilion was taken to the Guemes Hospital, where he will remain hopitalized until today.

Defense Ministry sources said the minister only felt "light" pain, and that he would return to his official duties in the next few hours.

Camilion was hospitalized in the heart unit on the sixth floor of Guemes Hospital. He is to be released this afternoon to go to a private farm in Tortuguitas, Buenos Aires Province.

The medical report released at 1400 today, signed by Doctors Ignacio Katz and Luis de la Fuente, says: "Guemes Hospital reports that yesterday at 2100 Oscar Camilion was hospitalized for temporary tachycardia and acute gout. His condition is developing favorably, and he will therefore be released today."

Economy Minister Announces Measures in Tucuman

PY1604165593 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1220 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Text] San Miguel de Tucuman, 15 Apr (NA)—Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo announced here that a line of credit will be granted to regional economies. He said that the state will subsidize the Belgrano freight train, and added that the toll system will be ended on national highways.

Cavallo said that a total of $300 million in credits will be granted by the National Bank and that the Warrant System will be used. This system allows producers to use their stored stocks as collateral.

These credits are intended for seasonal products from the regional economies such as sugar, cotton, tobacco, wool, rice, alcohol, and wine.

Concerning freight transport by the Belgrano railroad, Cavallo said that the state will subsidize it until a decision is made to transfer it.

It was thus confirmed that the proposal submitted by the National Railway Union to run that line is "feasible" and may be accepted by government officials.

The decision to subsidize is another way of integrating the Northeast of Argentina with the economies throughout the country by reducing the cost of transporting merchandise.

The volume of subsidy is still being evaluated and will be announced within the next few days.

Concerning highways, the economy minister said the toll system will be discontinued. He explained that on highways leading to the federal capital, including the Pan-American highway, this system will be maintained.

The minister said that as of now the idea is to implement a system of concessions for the reconstruction of deteriorated highways, without a toll system, and for their maintenance for a lengthy period. The project foresees bids to refurbish highways in which those who offer the lowest price will be chosen.

Cavallo yesterday said this during a visit to this province as part of a rapprochement plan between the governments and producers from the different regions over the next few months.

The minister's visit to Tucuman was considered a virtual launch to the electoral campaign for the 3 October elections.

Although this consideration was denied by the minister, several governors have expressly asked for his presence in their territories as a way to improve their electoral chances.

Cavallo spoke before some 200 businessmen from Tucuman and took advantage of the situation to emphatically reaffirm that the government "will not implement any easy measure like devaluation."

Brazil

Embassy in Bogota 'Operating Normally' Despite Damage

PY1604211793 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 1600 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] In the wake of an escalation of bomb attacks, the Colombian Government has declared a state of alert. A presidential spokesman accused Pablo Escobar, drug kingpin of the Medellin cartel, of being responsible for the bomb attack that nearly levelled the Brazilian Embassy in Bogota.

A car bomb containing some 100 kg of dynamite, which was parked in front of the shopping center where the Brazilian Embassy is located, was detonated yesterday evening, leaving in its wake a death toll of 11 with 120 injured, including seven officials from the Brazilian Embassy.

Brazilian Ambassador to Colombia Alberto da Costa e Silva was at the time in Brazil, where he is escorting Colombian Foreign Minister Nohemi Sanin de Rubio. Charge d'Affaires Flavio Bonzanini was therefore taking the place of the ambassador when the car bomb exploded. Rede Globo Television talked to him on the telephone.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified reporter] Good afternoon, Mr. Bonzanini. You were at the embassy at the time of the explosion, weren't you?

[Bonzanini] Yes, indeed. I was in my office. The shock of the blast, which was very powerful, shattered many windows. The explosion was so near the embassy that most of us working here did not hear the sound of the car exploding, but rather felt the shockwave. It threw us into total confusion; it was a terrible scene.

[Reporter] How many Brazilians were injured by the explosion?

[Bonzanini] Five Brazilians and two Colombians were injured by shards of window glass and pieces of metal. All the window panes were shattered, part of the embassy collapsed, pieces of ceiling piled up, equipment was destroyed—the damage was quite significant.

[Reporter] Do you believe the attack was aimed at the Brazilian Embassy?

[Bonzanini] No, I do not think so. [end recording]

Foreign Minister Fernando Henrique Cardoso does not believe the attack that damaged the Brazilian Embassy is linked to the agreement between Brazil and Colombia to fight drug trafficking. Meanwhile, the Colombian Embassy in Brasilia is concerned. The Rio Branco battalion in charge of the security of embassies in Brasilia has reinforced the patrol outside the Colombian Embassy. Inside the embassy, an official said the attack worried Colombian diplomats, because at this time Brazilian and Colombian relations are very good.

Foreign Minister Cardoso said at the Foreign Ministry that the Brazilian Embassy in Bogota is operating normally despite the fact that it was partially destroyed. Cardoso also said he could not report the attack to the president immediately because the president was busy at the time, but he fully briefed President Itamar Franco at his home last night.

Brazil has an agreement with Colombia to fight drug trafficking. Yesterday's attack could be a reaction from the Medellin cartel against the Brazilian Government. The Foreign Ministry said, however, that the agreement in question is not new, having been signed in 1991. Cardoso added that the negotiations with Colombian Foreign Minister Nohemi Sanin, who is currently visiting Brazil, relate exclusively to economic and cultural matters. Minister Cardoso does not therefore see any link between the attack and the agreement to fight drug trafficking:

[Begin recording] They are not linked. This is a Colombian internal matter that affected Brazil. Besides, the attacks also affected other foreign missions that were located in the area. [end recording]

Colombian Foreign Minister Pays Visit

Discusses Escobar, Cooperation

PY1604173893 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1845 GMT 14 Apr 93

[Text] Brasilia, 14 Apr (EFE)—Colombia Foreign Minister Nohemi Sanin said today in Brasilia that "there are many theories" on the whereabouts of drug trafficker Pablo Escobar, chief of the "Medellin Cartel."

Sanin has begun a four-day visit to Brazil. She said she has not discussed with Brazilian Justice Minister Mauricio Correa the investigation by the Brazilian Federal Police on the version that Escobar had recently made a leisure trip to the Parati beach resort on the Rio de Janeiro coast.

She said that in every country she visits she is told that the trafficker, who is sought by the Colombian Army and Police, was there before her.

Regarding the version that Escobar had been in Rio de Janeiro, the Colombian minister said "there is no information to prove it."

During her visit to Brasilia, Sanin met with Brazilian President Itamar Franco and with Foreign Affairs Minister Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Justice Minister Mauricio Correa, and Education Minister Murilio Hingel.

Sanin discussed with Correa cooperation formulas in the field of drug enforcement and criminality, especially along the common 1,455 km border between the two countries in the Amazon region.

They also discussed possible measures to restrict, through customs control, the trade of chemicals used to manufacture cocaine.

The Colombian foreign minister, who will also visit Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, said that in light of Colombian experience, she has offered her Brazilian interlocutors assistance in combating narcoterrorism.

Negotiates Coffee Strategy

PY1604180493 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1840 GMT 14 Apr 93

[Text] Brasilia, 14 Apr (EFE)—The governments of Brazil and Colombia, the two largest coffee producers, today agreed on a new strategy in face of the failure to negotiate an international coffee agreement on quotas and prices.

The agreement was made during the meetings in Brasilia by Colombian Foreign Minister Nohemi Sanin de Rubio who is paying an official four-day visit to Brazil. She will also visit Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

During a news conference with Brazilian journalists, Sanin said the two countries regret the suspension of negotiations within the International Coffee Organization (OIC) and they decided to unite efforts to define a common strategy.

The Colombian foreign minister said the strategy "cannot increase prices" although it will help the two producing countries to create internal policies favoring coffee farmers so that production will not be affected.

According to Sanin, coffee producers are being paid less than the international market price.

Discusses Bombing With Franco

PY1704141693 Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 1030 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] Colombian Foreign Minister Nohemi Sanin yesterday telephoned President Itamar Franco to thank him for the way she was received in Brazil and to ask for the Brazilian Government's understanding regarding an incident involving the Brazilian Embassy in Colombia. On 15 April, a terrorist group detonated a car bomb at the premises where the Brazilian Embassy operates in Bogota. President Itamar Franco told the Colombian foreign minister that the incident will not tarnish the relationship between the two countries.

Operations at the Brazilian Embassy in Bogota resumed on 16 April, less than 24 hours after the Brazilian Embassy compound was partially destroyed by the explosion of a car bomb.

According to Foreign Minister Fernando Henrique Cardoso, diplomats and most embassy personnel, including some officials who were injured, have already resumed their duties.

Visits Rio, Returns Home

PY1704022793 Brasilia Voz do Brasil Network in Portuguese 2200 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Colombian Foreign Minister Nohemi Sanin concluded her three-day official visit to Brazil in Rio de Janeiro. She dismissed the possibility that the bomb attack in Bogota yesterday had been targeted at the Brazilian Embassy.

Nohemi Sanin denied in Rio that the bomb attack in Bogota was aimed at the Brazilian Embassy. She said that possibility has been entirely dismissed:

[Begin recording] Absolutely. The intelligence information we have received has entirely dismissed that possibility. The attack was not aimed at the Brazilian Embassy in Colombia. Regrettably, some embassy personnel were injured, but not seriously. The embassies of Morocco, Korea, and Honduras were also affected. The people and the government of Colombia condemn the incident. We regret it. It is a consequence of Colombia's fight against drug trafficking. [end recording]

The Colombian minister said her country had lost important political figures, prosecutors, and humble people who had faced with courage the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism. Sanin said the fight is international, and that Colombia has enjoyed the cooperation of Brazil, which holds the same commitment to fight the illegal trade.

The foreign minister closed her three-day official visit to Brazil in Rio de Janeiro. In the morning she met with Governor Leonel Brizola and Mayor Cesar Maia. In the afternoon she had a meeting with businessmen at the Commerce Association, seeking more integration among the two countries' entrepreneurs in order to increase trade between the two nations, which is considered small. The visit had one immediate result: During the next quarter a Brazilian business delegation will visit Colombia.

The minister donated books on literature, sociology, and economics to the National Library. Tonight the Rio de Janeiro legislative assembly awarded her with the title of Woman of the Year and the Tiradentes Medal. She then returned to Colombia.

Finance Minister To Seek Compromise With IMF

PY1604232093 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 14 Apr 93 p 5

[Article by Regina Alvarez from Brasilia]

[Text] Even though he lacks a program to curb inflation in the short run, Finance Minister Eliseu Resende will try to resort to a political solution to reach a settlement with the IMF. This gambit was used quite successfully by Marcilio Marques Moreira, finance minister during the Collor administration.

Advisers to the finance minister concede that technically speaking it will be difficult for Brazil to wrest support from the IMF. They nonetheless believe in a political solution, and in the IMF's interest in working out an agreement with the committee of creditor banks, which is in the works.

Resende will tell the IMF that his country will not be able to handle new draconian economic measures. Inflation will therefore have to be gradually controlled by means of a comprehensive tax reform derived from the constitutional reform.

Resende will pledge to continue enforcing a policy of monetary and financial restraint, in spite of the fact that his advisers believe this puts too much pressure on the budget and hampers economic recovery. The finance minister will commit himself to going ahead with the government's privatization policy and opening drive. Moreover, he will promise not to implement price controls, and to honor foreign obligations.

Armed with these pledges, Resende will be traveling to Washington to seek IMF support. His trip to the United States is slated for the end of the month.

According to the economic team, inflation will only be beaten—a traditional mandatory requirement by the IMF—once the tax reform is implemented. Until then, the aim is "to maintain the status quo," as Economic Policy Secretary Carlos Eduardo de Freitas put it yesterday in talking to a leading retailer.

Once he obtains IMF political backing, Resende hopes to be able to negotiate viable targets for 1993. The Brazilian Government agrees to have a fiscal surplus (revenues minus expenditures) amounting to 3-4 percent of the gross domestic product. In 1992 Brazil fell 0.7 percent short of the 3 percent target set by the IMF.

The Brazilian Government is quite ambitious in its targeted operating budget, which reflects service debt payments. In 1992 it was able to meet the target of an operating budget deficit of 2.7 percent. This year, however, the target is to have a near zero deficit. In order to achieve this the government will have to reduce spending to meet its public debt obligations by using the proceeds from privatizations.

The economic team is still studying the budget to determine cutbacks, and therefore has serious doubts as to whether Resende will be able to provide the IMF with a detailed study of Brazil's accounts on 29 April. Nevertheless, Resende must give proof that he is ready to abide by IMF requirements.

Colombia

Pepes Resumes Actions Against Escobar Supporters

Bombs Medellin Property

PA1704171093 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0000 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] Two dynamite attacks against the property of members of the Medellin Cartel broke the tranquillity people in Medellin have enjoyed since 4 March, when Pepes [Persecuted by Pablo Escobar] called a truce against attacks to Pablo Escobar's organization.

[Begin unidentified witness recording] It occurred at 2300 [0400 GMT 15 April] when eight cars, allegedly belonging to the Pepes, drove by and blew up this building. I fled. [end recording]

This attack was perpetrated by men with weapons riding in five four-by-four vehicles and two automobiles in an exclusive countryside residential area known as Fisebad, 30 km from Medellin. The property belongs to Ivan Giovanni Lopera Zavala, who is serving time at the maximum security prison in Itagui.

A second attack took place simultaneously in La Pintada municipality against a construction site belonging to Carlos Alzate Urquijo, alias El Arete. These incidents confirm the contents of the communique sent to the media by Pepes, declaring a frontal war against Pablo Escobar, in which there will allegedly be no innocent victims.

Kidnaps, Kills Escobar Lawyer

PA1604233093 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 2225 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Breaking a truce that lasted 43 days, the Persecuted by Pablo Escobar, or Pepes, group on 16 April kidnapped and murdered attorney Guido Parra Montoya and his eldest son, Guido Andres Parra Sierra. Their bodies were found on the afternoon of 16 April in the trunk of a taxi stolen hours earlier. The taxi, assembled in Ecuador, bore license plate No. DIK 236 and was affiliated with the [name indistinct] company. It was abandoned in Las Palmas in eastern Medellin, two and a half hours after the Parras were kidnapped by a group of 16 armed men who broke into the family's apartment on the eighth floor of the Bundaril building in Santa Teresita, western Medellin.

Parra Montoya, age 51, and his son, age 16, had their hands tied with plastic string and were shot. On the bodies was a note that read: Through their profession they carried out kidnappings for Pablo Escobar. The Pepes. How about exchanging the bombs in Bogota for Pablo?

Approximately 80 meters from where the authorities found the Parras' bodies, a third body was discovered, that of a man of about 35 years of age and 1.75 meters tall, on whose body was a note accusing him of being a Medellin Cartel drug trafficking liaison.

It was reported this afternoon that Mr. Parra, who is survived by his wife Patricia and two younger children, Juan Gonzalo and Claudia, had no ties whatsoever with Escobar's organization at the time of his abduction and murder with his oldest son. His most outstanding role during his relationship with the fugitive Medellin Cartel leader came in 1991, when he negotiated with then Justice Minister Jaime Giraldo Angel the basis for his client's surrender to the Colombian authorities. To save his life he sought refuge for a while in Venezuela, according to statements made on 16 April by some of his colleagues.

On the evening of 15 April, the Pepes broke the truce in actions against Escobar, which they began on 4 March, by dynamiting rural properties owned by Medellin Cartel members who are confined at the Itagui prison. The properties in question are located in rural areas of El Retiro and La Quintana.

The slain attorney at one time was a very active member of the Liberal Party. He had been a member of the Senate, Chamber of Representatives, and legal secretary of former President Carlos Lleras Restrepo.

Destroys Medellin Cartel Discotheque

PA1804195093 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1200 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Text] Medellin—The clandestine organization Persecuted by Pablo Escobar, Pepes, on the evening of 17 April continued its terrorist escalation against the alleged economic structure of Pablo Escobar Gaviria's drug cartel.

Twenty hooded and heavily armed men in five vehicles blew up the establishment known as Cama Suelta, the most sophisticated discotheque in Envigado Municipality, on Chocho hill. After intimidating watchmen John Alberto Obando and Horacio Francisco Santamaria, the terrorists placed approximately 100 kg of gelatinous dynamite, which they activated later by remote control with an electronic system.

The explosion caused a fire that led to the total destruction of three floors of the establishment, which had been closed since November when it was confiscated for an investigation and later returned to its owners, according to a police report.

No one was injured in the explosion, according to the authorities who found a white and red flag with the inscription Pepes at the site. Damage to the building could easily surpass 500 million pesos, according to the authorities who assessed the damage after three fire engines extinguished the fire.

Government Offers Reward for Information on Pepes

PA1704182393 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1200 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] Santa Fe de Bogota— The government of President Cesar Gaviria Trujillo has offered 1 billion pesos for information leading to the identification and arrest of the members of the criminal group Persecuted by Pablo Escobar, Pepes.

On 16 April, this criminal organization kidnapped, tortured, and killed Guido Parra Montoya, his son Guido Andres, 18, and a taxi driver.

Places Security Agencies on Alert

PA1704161093 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1200 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] Medellin—Security agencies have been placed on a state of alert due to the resumption of military activities by the self-styled Pepes [Persecuted by Pablo Escobar], as it is believed this could worsen the current situation of public order in Medellin.

Meanwhile, Medellin Mayor Luis Alfredo Ramos Bustero condemned the murder of lawyer Guido Parra and his son Guido Andres, stressing that violence only brings more fear and terror. He demanded the solidarity of all sectors of society by creating a common front against those who want to take justice in their own hands and by cooperating with the authorities to stop terrorism.

Prosecutor General Gustavo De Greiff Restrepo expressed his concern over the murder of Guido Parra, his son, and a taxi driver. He said Colombia will not be viewed as a civilized country if private justice prevails. We must make sure judges effectively comply with their duties according to the law by preventing criminals from taking justice into their own hands, he stressed.

Army Commander Says Search for Escobar Continues

PA1604213093 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Interview with Army Commander General Hernan Jose Guzman by Marcela Duran at the Defense Ministry in Santa Fe de Bogota—live]

[Text] [Duran] We are here at the Defense Ministry with Army Commander General Jose Hernan Jose Guzman. Today the country is asking what is happening with drug boss Pablo Escobar? Why has he not been arrested? What is the Army doing to help the country in this serious situation?

[Guzman] First I would like to say that the Army voices its solidarity with the victims of this unchecked wave of crime promoted by the Medellin Cartel. Through the Search Unit and the Army units spread out in various areas of this criminal organization's sphere of influence, we will continue with the same impetus and effort. We are going to increase our intelligence work. We will bring in more troops if necessary because we will not lower our guard and allow these criminal actions to be repeated.

[Duran] National Newscast learned that the government has a new search unit almost ready to go after the Cali Cartel. What do you know about that?

[Guzman] The Attorney General's Office, Army, and National Police are committed to our work to hunt these criminals down anywhere in the country where the members of these specific drug trafficking organizations are located.

Group Begins Search for Cali Cartel Members

PA1804201193 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0130 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Text] A search group formed by special commandos from various sectors of the Public Force, including Administrative Department of Security, DAS, agents, has begun operating in Cali. Included in this group are members of the group searching for Pablo Escobar, and their goal is to combat, neutralize, and capture the Cali Cartel's top leaders. DAS Director Fernando Brito addressed the issue.

[Begin Brito recording] It will be to our advantage to form a single bloc to deal with the Cali Cartel.

[Unidentified reporter] Just like the...

[Brito, interrupting] Like the Medellin search bloc.

[Reporter] The Medellin Cartel.

[Brito] Unquestionably.

[Reporter] With members of the Army, police, and DAS.

[Brito] Army, police, and DAS. [end recording]

This week the authorities initiated an operation to neutralize a money laundering network that operates for the Cali Cartel.

[Begin Brito recording] Over the past few days we have conducted searches in six cities; we have gathered information and we have already frozen accounts. However, we have not yet consolidated the final results. [end recording]

The DAS director also announced an unprecedented struggle against the self-styled organization Persecuted by Pablo Escobar, Pepes, which on 17 April resumed its attacks on Escobar. This coming week the government will wage a campaign against the Pepes through the news media, offering rewards for their capture. Four members of the organization have already been identified, including Fidel Castano who has been accused of organizing paramilitary groups in Uraba.

To avoid excesses in the struggle against the country's leading drug traffickers and the Pepes, the operations will be supervised by the Prosecutor General's Office and the Attorney General's Office.

Justice Minister Interviewed on Car Bomb Incident

PA1704003493 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Telephone interview with Justice Minister Andres Gonzalez by Emisoras Caracol Dario Arizmendi—live]

[Text] [Arizmendi] What basis did the government have for saying that yesterday's terrorist act was committed by Pablo Escobar's terrorist organization? I am quoting the official communique.

[Gonzalez] The communique refers to intelligence information to which the government has access.

[Arizmendi] Does this mean the national government had been warned that there were indications that a terrorist attack was to occur in Santa Fe de Bogota?

[Gonzalez] There was some information [words indistinct] high-level intelligence authorities. For obvious reasons, I cannot explain this in detail because it could affect the extent of the use made of this information within the investigations. However, I want to reiterate that, based on that information, as stated in the government communique, the terrorist action was planned and carried out by that criminal organization.

[Arizmendi] Mr. Minister, 18 hours after the attack, how many people have been arrested as suspects?

[Gonzalez] The Attorney General's Office and the police are involved in a very strong action. They are questioning several people. I do not have the exact number of those arrested. Tasks such as questioning, inquiries, and the collection of evidence began last night in an effort to find out who did it.

[Arizmendi] After four months of relative calm in the capital, how does the government interpret this new criminal attack?

[Gonzalez] I think that it clearly shows the extent of terrorist actions and the opportunities that narcoterrorism has to carry them out. It also means that the state and society must have a very firm attitude to face these insane and absurd acts. It means the government will not lower its guard. It means the government will continue to take measures that are indispensable in confronting this situation. It also means that all citizens must be resolute in continuing to collaborate in the work to identify the criminals in order to try and punish them.

Dario, these are moments that call for a strong will. One of the basic objectives of terrorism is to break the people's will and determination. I think we begin to defeat that type of attitude by remaining firm and not allowing ourselves to be intimidated.

[Arizmendi] There are some who feel it was a desperate action by Pablo Escobar who feels truly decimated. Others feel that it shows that his military apparatus is strengthening. Which theory do you support?

[Gonzalez] I would not choose a theory. But I can tell you that the government has taken several measures and carried out actions that allow us to observe a weakening in his organization. But the fact is that harsh blows have been dealt to the criminal organizations. This is proven by the number of people arrested and killed. Thus, this entire effort, amid difficult circumstances, proves there is a very firm action against these organizations and their weakening is evident.

[Arizmendi] A few days ago, the Itagui inmates sent a letter to the media protesting a plan to transfer them en masse. Apparently, this is a plan ordered by your office or by the Attorney General's Office. What is the truth? What are the government's intentions? Does it want to keep the prisoners in Itagui or separate them for security reasons?

[Gonzalez] There are several aspects that should be taken into consideration. First, there is no systematic plan. Basically, actions are taken according to judicial orders and, obviously, to security considerations.

There is a simple explanation for the cases that have been dealt with so far. A prosecutor or a judge orders the transfer of a defendant at a given moment. It all depends on the legal situation of each individual. The inmates are under the orders of the pertinent judicial authority. Therefore, when a judicial order is issued, the Prison Directorate and the Justice Ministry do not hesitate to follow that order.

Consequently, all we do is apply the law and comply with judicial orders.

[Arizmendi] Why weren't there any terrorist attacks in recent weeks and then, the wave of violence resumed on 15 April?

[Gonzalez] It is a hypothesis that can only be clarified when the investigations conclude.

[Arizmendi] According to official reports, there have been three terrorist attacks on properties owned by Medellin Cartel members in the past few hours. What is the government stand with regard to an announcement by the Pepes [Persecuted by Pablo Escobar] an hour ago when they said they are going to resume the war against Pablo Escobar and the Medellin Cartel?

[Gonzalez] The government stressed it and reiterates it now: it rejects any type of action to take justice in one's own hands. Such actions only worsen the situation. The problems of violence cannot be solved through violence pushing the law and the institutions aside. All those forms of taking justice in one's own hands are condemned by the government.

[Arizmendi] Last night, the attorney general said that some people were detained in Medellin and charged with being members of the Pepes or other private justice groups. What information does your Ministry have on this?

[Gonzalez] We have the same information you have. It is the information that the Attorney General's Office normally gives us about the progress of investigations on people who have been arrested.

[Arizmendi] What is the extent of the measures taken by the government after the council of ministers met on 15 April?

[Gonzalez] First of all Dario, it severely condemned the action. We rejected such crime. Punishment for all terrorist crimes was doubled, particularly the placing or carrying of bombs or explosive devices. The sentence

will be up to 40 years. If the crime involves wounding or killing people, then those responsible for it will receive the maximum penalty: 60 years. It is important to note that there will be no reduction in these sentences, unless in cases of collaboration with justice. Criminals involved in these acts will be punished severely. They will have no alternative except to cooperate with justice if they want a sentence reduction.

[Arizmendi] Since this was a measure issued under the state of internal disturbance, will the government forward a bill to permanently enact these measures?

[Gonzalez] Yes, the government intends to send this to Congress, particularly because it involves an increase in sentences which will require a law that guarantees the effectiveness of these measures.

[Arizmendi] With yesterday's incident and with the government's direct accusation against Pablo Escobar, does it mean that Escobar can forget about a possible Escobar surrender?

[Gonzalez] I simply reaffirm that which was stated in the communique and the contents of the intelligence information. It is up to the criminals to assess the circumstances and make decisions. They either [word indistinct] the law or they abide by it.

* Narino: Businessmen Doubt Free Trade Benefits

93SM0210A Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 15 Mar 93 p 8B

[Article by Edison Parra G.: "Narino: Worried Concerning Trade With Ecuador"]

[Text] *Entrepreneurs are saying that the trade liberalization does not benefit them.*

Pasto—Contrary to what the Government has indicated, free trade between Colombia and Ecuador has had no significant effect on Narino.

This is the conclusion drawn at a workshop seminar held by the Pasto Chamber of Commerce on the diagnosis and prospects of the industrial sector, attended by representatives of 36 Narino and four Putumayo municipalities.

Spokesmen for the farming and livestock, organized trade, artisan, micro-entrepreneurs, and private investors sectors were present.

Narino manufacturers and investors complained about the lack of government protection, but there was also introspection among them on the lack of leadership and of interest in assimilating the processes of change that are taking place in the country.

The causes: Taxes, interest rates, and the cost of transportation that prevents them from partaking of the liberalization of trade with Ecuador.

"As regards prices, we are not in a position to compete, and although we have some relative advantages in terms of quality, they are watered down by the high cost of transportation and the absence of facilities for large-scale marketing.

"The customs-free trade zone is yielding no benefits for Narino manufacturers. Those deriving benefit are the large manufacturers and dealers from the interior of the country," is the view expressed by those attending the seminar. It was also said that credit is "complicated and expensive."

The entrepreneurs pointed out that the requirements and red tape demanded by banks and financial agencies render the obtaining of capital needed to boost the productive capacity of the zone's enterprises enormously difficult, and often impossible.

This is the case especially with small and medium-sized manufacturers, because there are no credit facilities for development. Easy payment terms are not offered, and interest rates are high.

Leadership Is Lacking

But more obvious than anything else was the fact that Narino's businessmen, entrepreneurs, manufacturers, and micro-entrepreneurs had accepted that, here, it was "each man for himself. There is no interest in collectiveness."

"Here, there are no consortiums or cooperatives, as in other parts of the country, to facilitate the purchase of materials at moderated prices and the sale of final products. There is need for leadership to develop the spirit of association, and to create and strengthen concrete forms of business integration."

Another observation that emerged during this fault-finding introspection was the fact that the people of Narino "do not appreciate their own. They prefer to use outside products rather than those produced in the region. And the problem here is not one of quality or prices. It is simply that we do not value our own."

This phenomenon, which could have cultural roots, acquires particular importance in a situation such as that being generated by economic liberalization.

Lack of knowledge of what is happening outside the bounds of Narino was also identified as a negative factor in the development of the region.

The entrepreneurs who attended the workshop seminar said they are not informed of events such as fairs, congresses, seminars, and other events such as contests when they are being held in the interior of the country or in Ecuador.

The Chamber of Commerce replied saying that the problem is not with the association's operation and management, but solely with the entrepreneurs themselves who do not pay attention to its convocations and recommendations.

As an example, the Chamber of Commerce pointed out that it had invited a group of entrepreneurs to a meeting with the organizers of the "Expopacifico 93" international fair that is to be held in Cali between 17 and 21 March, and only two people answered the invitation.

[Box p 8B]

Rationing: Guilty

Narino's manufacturers complain of the inadequate generation and supply of electric power. This is perhaps the primary cause that prevents a greater social and economic development of the region.

Rationing has made the situation worse. The explanation lies in the rationing scheme being applied by Cedenar [Narino Power-Generating Stations].

The complaint is that instead of establishing daily schedules of distributed power cuts, as is done in Bogota and any other place in the country, the cuts are made over long periods spanning practically all the daylight hours (from 7 AM to 1 PM and from 5 PM to 7 PM).

This schedule seems rather "strange" to Narino's inhabitants, and the more so on weekends when service is cut altogether on Saturdays in the entire city center, a commercial area par excellence.

To all of the above is added another no less prejudicial factor for the industrial sector: Voltage fluctuations. The variations are so sudden and frequent that they regularly damage the machinery and equipment of business and industrial establishments, especially those whose technology is based on electronics.

For these reasons, it was agreed to ask Cedenar to operate its system efficiently, regulate the voltage, and change the rationing hours in coordination with the manufacturing sector in order to avoid causing bigger problems to the regional economy.

Ecuador

Finance Minister on Proposal To Pay Debt

PA1604125593 Quito Voz de los Andes in Spanish 2300 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Text] Ecuador has conditioned the payment of its debt with foreign creditor banks. Ecuador conditioned the restart of payment of its $6.5 billion debt with commercial banks, which was suspended in May 1992, to an overall agreement with its creditors.

During a news conference, Finance Minister Mario Rivadeneira said the Ecuadoran disposition to pay is related to advancement on the path of an overall solution to the problem of the foreign debt.

[Begin Rivadeneira recording] The proposal included the possibility of repurchasing the debt through a public auction, in an exceptionally clear and transparent operation, thus, Ecuador would be able to repurchase its debt at the price the holders of the debt are willing to set.

By doing this, Ecuador also annuls or recovers interest that has already been paid on that part of the debt. [end recording]

The second part of the formula would be to exchange the Ecuadoran debt for 30-year bonds with exceptionally low interest rates, added the finance minister.

[Begin Rivadeneira recording] Ecuador proposed a base interest rate of 2 percent, which would be increased in time in accordance with the expected favorable development of the Ecuadoran economy.

Of course, this does not mean that is the agreement reached with the banks. It is simply a basic proposal presented by Ecuador, which was received favorably—at least its structure—by the commercial banks. [end recording]

There is no date set for the next meeting with the creditor banks. The next meeting would take place when Ecuador presents to the banks a proposal regarding the payment of overdue interest.

Ecuador does indeed recognize there is a commitment the country must face in some way, concluded Finance Minister Mario Rivadeneira.

Paraguay

Reportage on Conflict With Argentina on Pilcamayo

Government Seeks Mercosur Support

PY1604202393 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 16 Apr 93 pp 22-23

[Excerpt] Brazilian Ambassador Carlos Eduardo Affonseca Alves de Souza and Uruguayan Ambassador Carlos Alberico Villar Ribero together yesterday held an unexpected meeting with Paraguayan Foreign Minister Alexis Frutos Vaesken, who gave them a detailed explanation of the conflict with Argentina over the diversion of the Pilcomayo River.

The alleged purpose of this meeting was to obtain the support of the remaining Mercosur [Common Market of the South] member countries when the Pilcomayo issue is raised before international forums.

The possibility that this issue could be brought before the OAS has increased in light of the fact that negotiations remain stalled, as the two parties maintain their positions and there appears to be no chance of reaching an agreement.

In the Brazilian ambassador's opinion, the conflict between Argentina and Paraguay over the diversion of the Pilcomayo River will not affect the integration process undertaken by the four countries.

The Brazilian ambassador asserted: "We are completely certain that it will not have any effect, because the impulse moving us toward integration is much stronger; the problem will soon be solved, and it will not affect Mercosur."

The Uruguayan ambassador said that his government is closely following this problem between Argentina and Paraguay.

He said that he learned about the conflict through the media, and that they were able to learn about the Paraguayan Government's stance during the meeting with Minister Frutos Vaesken. [passage omitted]

General Oviedo on Need To Resolve Conflict

PY1604211393 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 16 Apr 93 p 20

[Text] Yesterday, during a luncheon at Cavalry Division heaquarters to fete Argentine Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Martin Antonio Balza, 1st Army Corps Commander General Lino Cesar Oviedo dropped some hints regarding the diversion of the Pilcomayo River.

Oviedo said that one of the main tasks entrusted to the Argentine and Paraguayan Armed Forces by their respective constitutions is to safeguard their countries' sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In referring to the Argentine Government's unilateral decision to divert the Pilcomayo River, thus causing our country serious problems, Lino Oviedo said: "One's interests end where those of the other start. One must respect in order to be respected."

Oviedo, in the form of a metaphor in referring to the lion on the national coat of arms, told Balza that it is not a simple figure. "The lion represents the Paraguayan citizen."

In comparing the lion with the Paraguayan race, Oviedo said that the lion is a noble animal that safeguards the jungle, that "never offends or reacts unless it is for a worthy and fair cause—only to defend his rights and interests. The lion represents the blood group of most Paraguayans, universal O positive."

"This lion represents our spirit, our temperament, and our unwavering stance," said Lino Oviedo, clearly referring to the stance the government would adopt if the problem of the diversion of the Pilcomayo River is not solved.

He urged "all comrades in arms of neighboring countries" present at the luncheon to profoundly meditate "about the unity of our people, of our armies."

The 1st Army Corps commander recalled Argentine liberator Jose de San Martin and Paraguayan Colonel Jose Felix Bogado, whom he mentioned as an example of the possibility of uniting criteria for the benefit of the Paraguayan and Argentine citizens.

He also stated: "In our talks, in exchanging opinions with Gen. Balza, we have shared the same spirit, the same feelings, the same ideals and principles of honor for our people."

In a clear but indirect message on the need to solve the problem that has surfaced as a result of the diversion of the Pilcomayo River, Oviedo said: "Our fatherlands are calling upon us, but not to engage in war, as the military have already overcome those times in which they resorted to their swords and weapons. Let us sit down to negotiate, to plan, and to optimize the future of our armies and our people. Other countries have managed to achieve this objective, and we can do so, too, for the well-being of our people. Our fanaticism does not prevail over our stubborness; our fanaticism only reaches the limit of our rights and what has been entrusted to us by the Constitution."

Government To 'Stand Firm'

PY1704030993 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 16 Apr 93 p 13

[Text] Asked about the diversion of the Pilcomayo River, President Andres Rodriguez said that the Paraguayan Government will continue to firmly demand the definitive closing of the channel that Argentina opened to divert Pilcomayo River waters. According to agriculture and livestock producers, the Argentine diversion channel hurts a large area in that zone of our territory. Regarding press reports that that the Argentine Government was hardening its position on the Pilcomayo River diversion channel and would not be willing to immediately close it, Rodriguez said: "I am not aware that Argentina has taken a harder position. If that is all, I can only say that we, too, will stand firm with our demands."

Rodriguez added: "I know that the two countries' foreign ministries are working to reach an agreement for a definitive solution to the problem. At least, that is the information I have."

Vice Admiral Eduardo Gonzalez Petit, new military forces commander, this morning expressed concern over the problem. However, he said that the Armed Forces will wait for orders from the commander in chief before acting, because the issue is still being handled at the diplomatic level. "We will give the necessary support to those who will go to the zone to carry out the necessary work," Gonzalez Petit said.

"In some respects Argentina has hardened its position, but in other aspects we have noticed progress in the negotiations. I think the issue will be resolved without too much difficulty," Gonzalez Petit said. The military commander also said that the Armed Forces were aware of the clearing work done on the Argentine side, "but we were not aware of the opening of a channel, because we trusted our neighbors," Gonzalez Petit stressed.

Argentine Foreign Minister on Issue

PY1704124793 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 16 Apr 93 p 13

[Article by correspondent Dolores Oliveira]

[Text] Buenos Aires—Argentine Foreign Minister Guido di Tella has told ULTIMA HORA that Argentina will not close the Pilcomayo River canal that diverts the water flow toward its territory, while other lower-level officials told this newspaper that the submission of a Paraguayan complaint to the OAS for the re-establishment of the old river course does not worry Argentina at all because third countries are not entitled to participate in this type of conflict.

Di Tella's remarks emerged simultaneously with the mission in Asuncion of Lieutenant General Antonio Martin Balza, chief of the Argentine Armed Forces General Staff, who presumably discussed the subject with high-ranking Paraguayan military officers.

According to the Argentine judgment, the Paraguayan complaint to the OAS will reportedly generate, at the most, a declaration against the Argentine position on the Pilcomayo issue. It could prompt retaliation by the other party against the intervention of third parties, and this would delay any effective decision. The lack of effectiveness of this resort undermines any concern regarding the strategy of the Argentine foreign policy, which remains normal, with no considerable change on this specific point.

Di Tella added that there is no intention to reach an "agreement with Paraguay to select an international mediator to diagnose the failure of the diversion, and in 60 days begin work to correct the course of the water."

He said: "Our suspicion is that the problem is not to close the Argentine canal but to open a deeper one on the Paraguayan side." He then said: "We do not want to steal the river from Paraguay, but as you know, elections will be held very soon in that country and this fact seems to make political leaders very nervous."

Other reports have emerged in lower levels of the Argentine Foreign Ministry that the government of President Andres Rodriguez is concerned about gaining the loyalty of the Stroessnerist areas of the Colorado Party to vote for ruling party candidate Juan Carlos Wasmosy, and for this reason they are making these signs of nationalism as a political concession.

The restlessness increased over the past few days, the sources added, because the polls began to show an increasing trend toward independent presidential candidate Guillermo Caballero Vargas, the political adversary threatening the electoral ambitions of the ruling party.

According to reports, two Paraguayan Foreign Ministry officials, Deputy Foreign Minister Marcos Martinez Mendieta and Foreign Relations Director General Jose Maria Fernandez, this afternoon will make a quick visit to Buenos Aires to discuss the red-hot Pilcomayo River issue.

It was also learned that between Paraguayan Foreign Minister Alexis Frutos Vaesken and his Argentine counterpart, Guido di Tella, there is a verbal agreement not to close the diversion of the Pilcomayo River and to contract the services of a foreign consulting company to arbitrate the conflict.

This issue gained more force in the local press after the cancelled meeting between Presidents Andres Rodriguez and Carlos Menem in the Yacyreta Dam area scheduled for last Tuesday, 13 April.

Rodriguez Says Solution To Be Found 'Soon'

PY1704190993 Asuncion NOTICIAS in Spanish 16 Apr 93 p 13

[By correspondents Celso Chavez, Mario Diaz, Oscar Jara, and Celso Aguilera in San Estanislao]

[Excerpt] President Andres Rodriguez asserted here yesterday that a satisfactory agreement over the Pilcomayo River will be signed with Argentina soon, thus avoiding the need to request OAS intervention. Rodriguez even mentioned that Foreign Minister Alexis Frutos Vaesquen a few hours ago spoke to his Argentine counterpart Guido Di Tella and that they have already reached a basic understanding that will allow the signing of a document in which Argentina will agree to seal the canal after the river crests, something which usually happens in May.

When the president was asked what he thought about Di Tella's alleged statement that the Pilcomayo issue was a mere political maneuver used by Rodriguez due to the drop of popularity experienced by the Colorado Party presidential hopeful, he answered: "Did you hear him say that?"

Rodriguez then said that many things that are not true are published. He said: "At 1300 today (referring to yesterday, 15 April), I learned that Foreign Ministers Di Tella and Frutos Vaesken were discussing the issue and were reaching an agreement to sign a document."

He said he could not believe Di Tella would make such comments against him and reiterated that a solution "to that minor problem with Argentina" would be reached soon. [passage omitted]

[Asuncion Cerro Cora Sistema Nacional de Television Network in Spanish at 1600 GMT on 17 April during its regular newscast carries an approximately 2.5 minute interview with Paraguayan Foreign Minister Frutos Vaesquen, who says: "we are moderately optimistic that we will be able to reach an agreement." After noting that a Paraguayan mission is travelling to Buenos Aires to continue negotiations on Monday, 19 April, and that the Paraguayan Government has not varied its position on

the issue, he commented: "Despite everything, this problem—which greatly troubles us now—has its positive aspect: The opening of the canals has washed away a great part of the sediment, thus obstructing only 500 meters of the river instead of 8 to 9 kilometers, as in the past. This is a breath of hope that we have found the solution." "A solution to the diversion of the river by Argentina must be found. We are going to participate in the bilateral negotiations and if we are unable to find a solution through these channels then we will raise the issue with other organizations."]

Peru

Government Extends State of Emergency; Kidnapping Reported

PA1704201893 Paris AFP in Spanish 1926 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] Lima, 17 Apr (AFP)— An official report indicates that the Peruvian Government has extended the state of emergency for 60 days beginning 17 April in several provinces in three departments in the Amazon because the "terrorist and narcoterrorist activities continue" in those areas.

The measure, included in a decree issued and published in the official EL PERUANO newspaper, affects Huanuco, except Puerto Inca Province in eastern Amazon; northeast San Martin and the Yarimaguas district; and Alto Amazonas Province in Loreto Department, in the northeast of the Amazon.

The state of emergency was enforced in 1983 after the beginning of the armed confrontation in Ayacucho, 13 years ago. It continues in effect in over 50 percent of the Peruvian territory, including Lima and the nearby port of Callao.

In related news, six people were kidnapped in the small town of Tingo Maria, Huanuco, 500 km from Lima, during the first three days of the week by heavily armed men wearing masks.

Relatives of the victims, who were kidnapped under different circumstances, filed the appropriate reports with the legal authorities. The police, meanwhile, believe the kidnappers could be members of the guerrilla or drug trafficking organizations operating in the area.

Fujimori Praises Economic Power of Smaller Industries

PY1604224293 Lima LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 3 Apr 93 p 2

[Excerpt] President Alberto Fujimori has praised the efforts made by small and medium-sized industrialists to achieve our nation's economic recovery. In addition he announced that the government would continue to support them by purchasing their products during the two and a half years his administration has left in power.

He said that after corroborating the quality of the shoes manufactured by the the Small- and Medium-Sized Shoe Manufacturers' Industry [Pequenos y Medianos Fabricantes de Calzado] (Apemefac), the government requested that Apemefac next year supply 1 million pairs of shoes. In other sectors, orders have been placed for books and notebooks to be supplied to new schools.

Fujimori told industrialists that all national problems had not been solved, but he assured them that the proper measures are being adopted to resolve them.

In this regard he requested that people "not put too much emphasis" on the fact that the March inflation rate may be 4.2 or 4.9 percent—a rate economists consider too dangerous—but to look at the annual inflation rate (from March 1992 to March 1993), which totals 51 percent.

He stated: "This is a significant decrease in the inflation rate if we compare it to the exorbitant inflation rates we have experienced in the past."

Fujimori was optimistic about the "structural reforms" being implemented, stating: "Nowadays in Peru it is not only promises that are made. Things are done."

The 16th "Landal 93" exhibit (sponsored by Apemefac) was held at the Crillon Hotel.

The ceremony was attended by numerous small- and medium-sized shoe manufacturers, among whom was Miraflores Mayor Alberto Andrade Carmona.

Apemefac leaders praised the president, whom they believe "is someone who should be emulated."

They expressed their open support for the 5 April coup d'etat, and stated that they trust the pragmatic style of government that has been implemented. Fujimori expressed thanks for the words of (Apemefac Chairman) Wagner Torres and of Hildebrando Bustamante Seminario (entrusted with the organization of Landal 93).

In Fujimori's speech he praised small- and medium-sized industries, which in large part helped him win the 1990 presidential elections. [passage omitted]

Congressman on Clinton's Remarks on Balance of Power

PA1804185393 Lima Global de Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Text] Congressman Victor Joy Way pointed out that the statements made by U.S. President Bill Clinton do not imply a censure of the balance of power in Peru. He also made references to the economic issue.

[Begin Joy Way recording] I would not interpret the statements made by President Bill Clinton as judgemental. Undoubtedly we are undergoing a process of recovering institutionality in the country. We are not only strengthening our congress but also approving the constitution and working on establishing the autonomy of the Judicial Branch.

We must insist this is a process in which we seek an overall strengthening of our democracy. Under no circumstances do we believe that the remarks in any way insinuate that this congress is subordinated to the Executive Branch. I believe that you are the best witnesses of what we are doing.

We recently approved a motion to summon the economy minister so that, among other things, he will report on the economic situation, the reasons for inflation, the outlook ahead, and the actions to be taken. [end recording]

De La Puente on Plight of Peruvians in Argentina

PA1804004593 Lima Global de Television Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 17 Apr 93

[Text] Oscar de la Puente Raygada, president of the Council of Ministers, has announced that Alberto Ulloa, Peru's ambassador to Argentina, traveled to that southern country to assume his post and evaluate the situation of the Peruvian citizens stranded there. This has become a priority problem at the Foreign Ministry.

[Begin recording] [De la Puente] The ambassador arrived on 16 April and has asked to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the situation and to contact the Argentine authorities. This is a very delicate issue because it involves a large number of Peruvians who are in a difficult situation. It is a top priority for our Foreign Ministry and will be handled through our embassy in Buenos Aires and Ambassador Ulloa, who has just left.

[Unidentified reporter] Do you know how many Peruvian are there?

[De la Puente] No, because many leave illegally. They leave as tourists and then look for work with the conviction that the agencies that process their paperwork are capable of solving international problems regarding relations with [words indistinct]

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]?

[De la Puente] The Attorney General's Office is taking the appropriate steps. The judicial branch will have to intervene as well, because this case involves putting order in a market that sells hope to many Peruvians who trust this sort of invitation in their quest to find a better way of life somewhere in the world. The pay their money and then find that their dreams did not come true because they were fooled by a sales pitch. This is naturally a decision the appropriate authorities must make. The attorney general has acted, and I have no doubt that the travel agencies that have broken the law will be punished and closed accordingly. [end recording]

Shining Path Issues Resolution

PY1704184893 Lima EL DIARIO in Spanish Mar 93 Issue No. 627 pp 6, 7, 9

[Resolution issued by the Central Committee of the Peruvian Communist Party-Shining Path]

[Text] The Central Committee of the Peruvian Communist Party [PCP] hereby greets our dear, heroic, and eminent chief, President Gonzalo, the greatest existing Marxist-Leninist-Maoist, the greatest political and military strategist, philosopher, master of Communists, center of unification of the motherland, who, by creatively applying the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist principles to the concrete conditions of Peruvian revolution has generated the Gonzalo Thought, which guarantees the triumph of the revolution.

The PCP Central Committee reasserts its total, conscious, and unconditional subjection to the single leadership of President Gonzalo and to the entire party direction system.

The PCP Central Committee reasserts the historical recognition of the First Party Cong...:

"The members of the Congress express our acknowledgement to President Gonzalo as the continuer of Marx, Lenin, and President Mao Zaodong, who has guaranteed the consecration of the main party historical landmark. The members of the Congress likewise express a cheerful Communist greeting to President Gonzalo for having begun and conducted the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Gonzalo Thought that will smash the new counterrevolutionary offensive headed by Gorbachev and Deng. By developing the Gonzalo Thought, Maoism will be imposed as a new and third stage of the international proletariat revolution until communism is attained." (June 1989)

Now that our dear chief has fallen in a difficult situation as a consequence of a nefarious work accident, we firmly assume his September 24 brave and decided call from prison:

"We are living through an historical movement. Each one must so clearly understand it. Let us not deceive ourselves. We must now put all our forces on alert to face the difficulties and to continue complying with our tasks and achieving our goals, successes, and victory! That is what must be done!

And that is what our party has been doing: leading the uncontainable Popular War to Conquer Power throughout the country, developing the Strategic Equillibrium; Creating more New Power, organizing today the People's Liberation Front; Having the People's Liberation Army as a main organizational form; resolutely applying the agreements of the glorious, historical, and transcendental Third Central Committee Plenum. We are now fully implementing the Fourth Strategic Development Plan of the People's War to Conquer Power, and the Fourth Military Plan "To Prepare the Conquest of

Power," with its First Campaign "In Defense of Leadership and Against Genocidal Dictatorship," planning overwhelming armed actions that will make imperialism, the great bourgeoisie, the large land owners, as well as the revisionist and opportunist lackeys, and all their paid writers who in vain try to conceal the obvious reality, tremble with horror.

We categorically repudiate the despicable lies of the genocidal traitor and of all the pack of bloodhound defenders of the age-old order, who are trying to smear the Chief of the Party and of the Revolution. President Gonzalo is the greatest example of a communist, and from the very beginning of the invincible People's War he has gone underground and remained there for more than 12 years in a heroic, tenacious, and brave fight, leading the revolution step-by-step; it is under these circumstances that he was detained on 12 September by the informers of "DINCOTE" [National Counterterrorism Directorate]; but, our people must know about it, that such detention was carried out with the advice and leadership of the Yankee imperialism through the sinister CIA (Central Intelligence Agency); the imperialism that openly promotes the so-called "low intensity war" in our country.

We firmly hold that the genocidal traitor of Fujimori, the cowardly and genocidal Armed Forces commanded by experts in defeats and in setting upon disarmed masses, the church hierarchy, the judges and bureaucrats who approve the genocide, and their great puppeteer, mainly Yankee imperialism, responsible for the life and health of our chief, otherwise, if something happens to him, they will all pay with their lives and that of all their relatives, whatever the cost. [sentence as published] We demand respect for the rights of prisoners of war and we demand the presence of the international organizations that allegedly are supposed to guarantee the compliance of basic agreements and legal norms established by the reactionaries themselves and which they say they respect.

We warn our heroic people not to be deceived by the black lies schemed by the genocidal dictatorship that is applying "a low intensity war" ordered by its master, Yankee imperialism. That is why we condemn the so-called "repentance law" approved by the genocidals and based on which they have mounted that ridiculous farce that falsely preaches "the repentance of hundreds of subversives" as well as the alleged "massive detention of Shining Path members," or the "bombarding and destruction of Shining Path forts in Ayacucho (Vizcata, Waripata), Huallaga, etc." We reassert that the Gonzalo Thought Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Peoples War is invincible and it will inexorably achieve victory; and this does not depend on the will of that upstart puppet [Fujimori] who is not even sure whether he will conclude his presidential term; it also does not depend on the will of the genocidal Armed Forces nor on that of Yankee imperialism which has been defeated so many times by the same Peoples War. But what they want to cover up with their lies is the very serious situation in which the old state finds itself. It has no other way out: They are concealing the desertion of dozens of soldiers who are used as cannon fodder and the hundreds of casualties they are suffering at the hands of the Peoples Liberation Army; they are trying to conceal the serious contradictions that currently exist between the two factions of the great bourgeoisie and which are reflected at the heart of its rotten Armed Forces.

We thank and acknowledge the solidarity and support of the international proletariat class, of the Internationalist Revolutionary Movement [Movimiento Revolucionario Internacionalista], of the Communist parties, of the people's organizations, of the peoples of the world, who have raised their voices to protest and their firm fist in Defense of President Gonzalo through declarations, meetings, mobilizations, and armed actions. We are hereby calling them to continue carrying out these tasks united under the Hail Maoism! campaign.

During the Third Plenum of the Central Committee President Gonzalo said: "Maoism which has begun in all the nations of the world, is on its way to command the great wave of the World Proletariat Revolution." He also said during his 24 September speech, "What do we need? We need Marxism to be extended and that is what is happening; it must generate Communist parties in order to conduct that great wave of the World Proletariat Revolution that is coming." "Next year we will commemorate Mao's 100th birthday. We must celebrate the 100 years! And we are organizing it with the Communist parties." That is what we began to do because Maoism is the third, new, and superior stage of the international proletariat's ideal, and it is decisive.

Finally, we reassert our unmovable decision of giving our life for President Gonzalo, the Party, and the Revolution. We reassert our firm resolution to conduct the People's War to Attain Power in the whole Country, by faithfully, persistently, and vigorously applying our unfading and almighty ideology, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism Gonzalo Thought.

Hail Maoism!
Hail President Gonzalo!
Defend the Life of President Gonzalo!
Hail Marxism-Leninism-Maoism Gonzalo Thought!
Develop the Strategic Balance!

Central Committee
Peruvian Communist Party
Peru, December 1992

Army Displays Weapons Seized in Northern Area

PA1804190193 Lima Global de Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 18 Apr 93

[Text] During a news conference, the Army presented a large quantity of subversive propaganda and materiel that was seized during operations that were carried out in the Jaen, Bagua, and Utcubamba Provinces in northern Peru.

General Carlos (Brigoli Cortijo), chief of the Army's 5th Infantry Division, presented army uniforms, missiles, [words indistinct] grenades, detonators, rifles with telescopic sights, terrorist instruction manuals, and terrorist flyers. The general pointed out that the seizure of this subversive material is a harsh blow against the seditious groups operating in the northeastern areas of El Maranon and Amazonas.

Although the captured terrorists were not presented to the media, it was reported they belong to dangerous and notorious groups from the north.

Uruguay

President To Visit Argentina To Discuss Gas Pipeline

PY1604230093 Montevideo Radio El Espectador Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 15 Apr 93

[Text] The president of the Republic will travel to Santa Fe, Argentina, to negotiate an agreement with the provincial government allowing the construction of a gas pipeline between the two countries.

Dr. Luis Alberto Lacalle's visit will take place in May. He will be joined by two or three ministers, including the industry, energy, and mining minister.

The implementation of this project is presenting serious problems as a direct consequence of the privatization of the gas company in Argentina.

The existence of many agents, the lack of seasonal and off-season rates, that is, winter and summer rates, and the reluctance to sign contracts with fixed terms and with prices freely regulating these agents have prevented Argentines from knowing whether or not they will have enough natural gas available.

As there were but two possibilities raised for the gas pipeline's location, if the president is going to Santa Fe it appears obvious that the projected pipeline crossing from Santa Fe and Paysandu to conduct the gas to our country has prevailed.

During the second half of May or in the middle of May, Lacalle will therefore be in Santa Fe, trying to resolve this issue.

'Good Perspectives' for Strengthening Argentine Trade Ties

PY1604224793 Montevideo Radio El Espectador Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Following a meeting between the foreign ministers of Argetina and Uruguay, it was learned that there are good perspectives for strengthening the Argentine-Uruguayan economic cooperation agreement, better known as CAUCE [Convenio Argentino-Uruguayo de Complementacion Economica].

It has been decided to create a binational committee to negotiate bilateral subjects within 30 or 60 days, after Foreign Ministers Sergio Abreu and Guido Di Tella have made an evaluation. The two ministers also ratified the entire validity of the River Plate Treaty, and agreed to jointly dredge the Martin Garcia channel in keeping with commitments the two governments assumed in that treaty.

Revolutionary Movement Abandons Broad Front Coalition

PY1704013193 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0220 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Montevideo, 15 Apr (EFE)—The Uruguayan Revolutionary Movement (MRO), a wing of Uruguay's extreme left, announced today that it has backed out of the Broad Front—the coalition governing the city of Montevideo, and the third most important political force in Uruguay—because most of its members have done a "U-turn toward social democracy."

The MRO, as well as other groups that belonged to former guerrilla movements in Uruguay, such as the Tupamaro Movement, is part of the leftist coalition that polls 22 percent of the votes nationwide. In the December 1989 election Tabare Vazquez—a moderate Marxist-Socialist—was elected mayor of Montevideo. The MRO thus gained a government post for the first time.

Mario Rossi Garretano, an MRO leader who was reprimanded by the Broad Front executive board when he made a statement last year supporting armed struggle as a progressive recourse, now says he does not agree with Broad Front leaders' views.

One of the decisions that annoyed the MRO is the willingness of the Broad Front majority to pay the foreign debt, which is a payment that the coalition has for years said "should not be paid and is immoral," as it was contracted during the 12 years of military governments.

The MRO also disagrees with the repression being carried out by the municipality of Montevideo against street vendors, as part of regulations to maintain control over informal businesses.

The MRO is one of the groups that participated in the creation of the Broad Front, and it participated in the latest elections together with the former Tupamaro guerrilla group and with a small sector of the extreme left known as the Workers Party.

Venezuela

Perez on AD Internal Elections, Other Issues

PA1804185493 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 1452 GMT 18 Apr 93

[News conference by President Carlos Andres Perez with unidentified reporters at Santa Cruz del Este School in Prados del Este—live; broadcast in progress]

[Text] [Perez] .... All the political parties are preparing partisan civic activities like the one Democratic Action [AD] is holding today. I urge all AD members to vote at their respective polls throughout the country to ensure that the party's candidate will be the person most highly regarded, beloved, and trusted by the party's membership.

[Reporter] [question indistinct]?

[Perez] I have, as always, an optimistic view of AD's prospects because our party has played a very important role in the country's democratic process.

[Reporter] There has been a lack of enthusiasm in this election.

[Perez] I do not believe there has been a lack of enthusiasm. Party elections have always been that way. On election day the people never seem enthusiastic. Each person goes out and votes.

[Reporter] Do you not believe [words indistinct] a consequence of your economic policy?

[Perez] You can respond to that yourself. If you think that is the case [words indistinct]?

[Reporter] Mr. President, there are issues of national interest like the oil workers' strike.

[Perez] I do not believe there will be a strike in the oil sector. I have confidence in the union leadership's good sense as well as in the ability of Venezuelan Petroleum to do right by their workers.

[Reporter] [question indistinct]?

[Perez] An agreement has not been reached; it is being discussed.

[Reporter] [question indistinct]?

[Perez] I believe an agreement will be reached.

[Reporter] We are also on the verge of a teachers' strike.

[Perez] These strikes seems to be a daily event. Every year there are teachers' strikes in Venezuela, which is unfortunate. Venezuelan teachers should be more understanding; they should devote more time to setting a good example for the children. The teachers have never gone on strike to demand improved study programs or program revisions; they strike exclusively for economic reasons.

[Reporter] Are you going to meet with leaders of your party during the day?

[Perez] I am always meeting with leaders of my party.

[Reporter] Has the AD strayed from its mission as some AD leaders are saying?

[Perez] History will say if it has. I do not believe it has strayed from its mission.

[Reporter] [question indistinct]?

[Perez] I believe all Venezuelans should join the reflection process. We have brought many of our problems on ourselves.

[Reporter] Do you believe your government has tarnished the AD's image?

[Perez] No, I do not believe it has. Why should I? My government has carried out the farthest reaching transformation seen in this country during this century.

[Reporter] Do you believe the party's leadership has kept in step with this modernization?

[Perez] I am not going to judge my fellow party members. In my opinion they are one segment of the country and all of us are experiencing a very difficult and traumatic process.

[Reporter] Mr. President, will your government allow (?the Drug Enforcement Administration, DEA, to kidnap people in Venezuela)?

[Perez] For God's sake. You cannot ask that question of the president of the Republic. You cannot ask that question of the president.

[Reporter] Do you give credibility to the report released by the DEA?

[Perez] I only give credibility to the reports produced by my government's organizations. I view all other reports with the international respect I owe other countries' organizations.

[Reporter] What about money laundering [words indistinct]?

[Perez] That is a very big problem; it is necessary for congress to approve the drug law so we can standardize and punish this crime.

[Reporter] Is your government adopting any initiative?

[Perez] We sent a bill to congress, which is essential.

[Reporter] When was it presented, Mr. President?

[Perez] Enough. Greetings to all my fellow Venezuelans and I invite all my fellow party members to go out and vote.

President Perez Announces Approval of 1994 Budget

PA1704233893 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 2350 GMT 16 Apr 93

[Text] Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez announced that on 16 April the Council of Ministers approved the umbrella law and the budget for the 1994 fiscal year.

[Begin recording] [Perez] The 1994 budget has been approved, and I believe it will be presented on 20 April by the....[pauses]

[Unidentified reporter, interrupting] What is the amount of the budget?

[Perez] It is 1.317 trillion bolivares.

[Reporter] How about the umbrella law?

[Perez] The umbrella law was also approved. I do not recall the amount. [end recording]

Government To Postpone Gasoline Price Hike

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[Text] In accordance with a decision reached during the 16 April Council of Ministers meeting, gasoline prices will not be increased. In a rather unusual move, President Carlos Andres Perez himself announced to reporters the results of the 16 April Council of Ministers meeting, which lasted only an hour.

During his meeting with the media, President Perez said he has confidence in those who are seeking a solution to the petroleum workers' labor conflict.

[Begin Perez recording] I am very pleased because I know the oil workers' leaders have adopted an understanding and flexible stand. The negotiators from management are also taking all circumstances into consideration and are offering the oil workers a significant salary hike. [end recording]

The president also took advantage of the occasion to reiterate that his government will continue to postpone a gasoline price hike even though he feels it is a serious mistake because it keeps problems from being solved, and gasoline now costs less than when it was last increased. [sentence as heard]

Gustavo Roosen, president of Venezuelan Petroleum [Petroven], clarified that Petroven has proposed several alternatives for handling domestic market prices, but the Energy and Mines Ministry decided to postpone the increase in gasoline prices for political reasons.

[Begin Roosen recording] Petroven is losing almost 40 billion bolivares in the domestic market. It is up to Venezuelans to decide what should be done about its enterprise, Petroven. If they want a strong enterprise, they should admit there is a need to increase prices on the domestic market. If they want to continue with a subsidy, it will be done at the expense of reducing our payments and therefore our fiscal revenues, which are indispensable in meeting other of the state's essential obligations such as health, education, social security, and so forth.

The discussion is as simple as deciding where we want to maintain the benefits: if we want to maintain the benefits in gasoline or in a better quality of services that could be increased if petroleum revenues increased as a result of an increase in domestic prices. [end recording]

As expected, the president was consulted on the Confederation of Venezuelan Workers' request for salary hikes. He said the issue is being considered, but he does not have any announcements to make on 1 May.

Oil Industry Offers Workers Pay Increase To End Conflict

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[Text] A last-minute report says the oil workers' labor conflict was virtually solved a few moments ago. The salary clause of the collective bargaining contract is now being studied.

The oil industry has offered the workers a 500-bolivares [Bs] increase, which the trade union representatives find reasonable. Payment conditions have been agreed upon as follows: Bs200 will be paid now, Bs150 in 1994, and Bs150 in 1995.